

AUTO Italia

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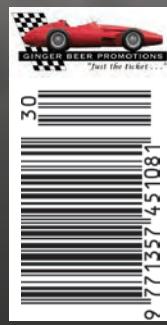


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LANCIA 037 RALLY ON TRACK WITH A RALLY ICON



The Maranello Ferraris
Maserati A6G54 Frua
Alfa Romeo 4C an owner's view
Ferrari 456 GT buyers' guide
Carrozzeria Balbo
Maserati Trofeo 2015 Season



Lamborghini Huracán HM-680-4 by Oakley Design



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We are about to launch our turn page edition of *Auto Italia*. It is a fact of life that paper publishing needs to be complemented by an on-line magazine. That is not to say that it will replace the traditional magazine. There are still many readers who prefer to have a paper publication sat on their coffee table, I know I do.

Given that most of my working day is dominated by a computer, and in the evenings progressively uninspiring television, I find it relaxing to dip in and out of the magazines that I subscribe to. However, there are people who don't mind staring at a computer screen at all times of the day and night so our new turn page edition will suit them admirably. One of the big advantages of the on-line edition will be the benefit to readers, particularly overseas, that can view each issue of *Auto Italia* as soon as it released. Our App readers already enjoy this, but now they can opt for the big screen version. Either way, I don't mind how you view *Auto Italia* as long as you keep reading it!

With the events season fast approaching, it is time to think about our first event at Brooklands on May 2nd. This is our 29th year and the event is now at capacity. We have plans to better utilise the display areas at Brooklands to accommodate more cars. We do have the ticket pre-booking facility in place as usual and I strongly recommend that classic car owners take advantage of the fast track entry to avoid the traffic. Club organisers should contact me before hand so we can allocate your space – and you do need to be on site early to defend it. A bonus this year will be the opportunity to visit Brooklands Cars Ltd that has occupied the restored buildings at the top of the Test Hill. Owner Steve Gray has invited event visitors to check out the new facility, he will also be running his AC 378 GT Zagato as one of the course cars. See you there, in the meantime check out www.brooklandscarsltd.com

Phil Ward

Editor

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ISSUE 230

APRIL 2015



NEWS & VIEWS

FERRARI 488 GTB DEBUT AT GENEVA



Ferrari celebrates 40 years of V8 development and opens a new chapter in its history with the turbocharged 488 GTB.

The new 3902cc V8 turbo is at the top of its class for power output, torque and response times. The engine develops 670cv (661bhp) at 8000rpm along with 760Nm (560lb ft) of maximum torque in seventh gear and a response time to the accelerator of just 0.8 seconds at 2000rpm. These figures are sufficient to allow the 488 GTB to accelerate from 0-200km/h (125mph) in an astonishing 8.3 seconds and, when combined with the radical innovations introduced on all aspects of the car's performance,

laps the Fiorano track in just 1'23".

The gearbox features Variable Torque Management which unleashes the engine's massive torque smoothly and powerfully right across the rev range, while specific gear ratios deliver incredibly progressive acceleration when the driver floors the throttle.

Ferrari's engineers have dedicated great attention to perfecting the 488 GTB's sound, creating a new soundtrack that is full, clear and totally distinctive.

The Ferrari 488 GTB will make its world debut at the International Geneva Motor Show in March, but can be viewed now at www.ferrari.com.





AVENTADOR LP 700-4 PIRELLI EDITION

The special series Lamborghini Aventador LP 700-4 Pirelli Edition celebrates the historical collaboration between the two brands. The partnership with Pirelli began back in 1963 when Lamborghini was formed and since then all its cars have been equipped with Pirelli tyres.

Available in Coupé and Roadster versions, the new Aventador Pirelli Edition will be produced in a limited series and is available to order from dealers for delivery early in summer 2015.

The special Pirelli series is enhanced by exclusive equipment specifically designed by the Lamborghini Centro Stile. The exterior sports a two-tone colour scheme in two options. The first is matt black for the roof, the pillars, the rearview mirrors, the engine hood, and the front, rear, side and moving air intakes, in contrast with six glossy colour choices for the rest of the body. The second option is glossy black for the upper parts of the car and the air intakes, in contrast with four matt finishes for the rest of the exterior.

Another distinctive element of the body is the thin red stripe that runs along the roof and the engine hood, the rearview mirrors, and the outer profiles of the air intakes. This stylistic feature is designed to evoke the unmistakable Pirelli branding.

The interiors are upholstered with black Alcantara with red contrasting stitching. The red stripe on the body is also repeated on the inside, running along the interior ceiling and the seats, which feature the Lamborghini and Pirelli crests embroidered in red. Leather inserts adorn the door panels and the seat sides. And finally, to underscore its exclusivity, each car will have a "Pirelli Special Series" plaque inside.



AUCTION VIEW

BURIED TREASURE UNDER THE HAMMER

A treasure trove of important cars was uncovered in September last year having been undisturbed since the 1970s. Owned by the Baillon family, two of the most desirable cars were auctioned by Artcurial at the Paris Retromobile sale in February, they were a Ferrari 250 GT California SWB (Ch. 2935 GT), previously owned by French film star Alen Delon, and a Maserati A6G 2000 by Frua (Ch. 2140).

The Ferrari is the last short chassis California to have been built with covered headlights, it was in original condition and untouched for the last 45 years, and probably never dismantled. The Maserati, thought by historians to have been lost, had remained in the Baillon family since 1959. It was, however, stored next to the California and has never been restored.

After much public interest and strong bidding activity the Ferrari was sold for £12.1m and the Maserati achieved £1.5m.



GOODINGS AT AMELIA ISLAND

Goodings have many interesting cars coming up in its Amelia Island sale on March 13. Our choices would be the Maserati 200SI and Fiat 8C Coupe by Vignale.

The Maserati is chassis 2401, a 1955 200S Factory Team Car later updated to 200SI specification (Sports Internazionale) in 1956. Currently unpainted, it has highly original bodywork. This important car has a huge international racing history as was driven by top names like Musso, Moss, Behra, Gonzales and Villoresi.

The 1953 Fiat 8V Coupe is one of only 10 Vignale-bodied Fiat 8Vs. Vignale's catalogue included five Coupes, one Spider and one Coupe Corsa. Only 114 examples of Fiat's 8V were built.

Although Fiat designed and built 34 of its own 8Vs it is the coachbuilt 8Vs by Ghia, Zagato and Vignale that are the most highly prized by collectors.





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Abath will be Official Sponsor and Official Car Supplier for the Yamaha Factory Racing team taking part in the 2015 FIM MotoGP World Championship. Abarth livery will adorn the YZR-M1s to be ridden by Valentino Rossi and Jorge Lorenzo.

The flagship product of the sponsorship to Movistar Yamaha MotoGP is the Abarth 695 Biposto, which is powered a 190HP 4 T-jet engine – the most powerful ever installed in an Abarth road car. The Biposto weighs just 997kg and accelerates from 0-62mph in a rapid 5.9 seconds. Furthermore, it is the first road car in its category in the world at present to be equipped with a dog-ring gearbox.



FIAT PARALLEL PARKING RECORD

Renowned stunt driver Alastair Moffatt has claimed the Guinness World Record for the Tightest Parallel Park. Driving a standard Fiat 500C 1.2 Cult, Alastair managed to park in a slot just 7.5cm longer overall than the vehicle. Moffatt's astonishing skill, and the agility of the Fiat 500, were on display at the Performance Car Show in January.

The vehicles used were all completely standard, with no modifications made to the engines, gearboxes, chassis or brakes. The ESC had to be disconnected to allow the Fiat 500 to be controlled using the handbrake, and the tyre pressures were also increased to compensate for the abrasiveness of the surface. Moffatt also added a steering knob to facilitate this extreme driving manoeuvre.



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The deal is based on a monthly cost of £239 over 36 months with a customer deposit of £1475 and optional final payment of £4531 based on an annual mileage of 6000.

To find out more about the scheme visit:
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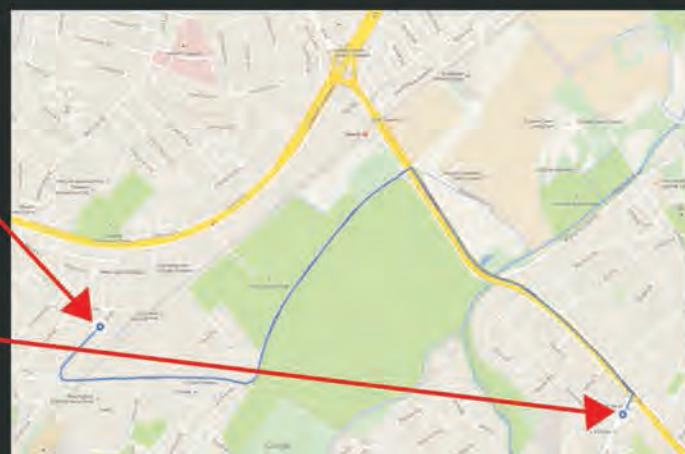
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DESIGN

AUTO ITALIA'S DESIGN CONSULTANT CHRIS HRABALEK DISCUSSES THE FINER POINTS OF AUTOMOTIVE DESIGN

Ferrari 488 GTB

CHRIS HRABALEK

Age: 37
Born: Vienna, Austria
Design Education: MA at The Royal College of Art, London
Current Job: Director of Entence Design Group, a holistic design consultancy with studios in London and Berlin, working with OEMs from US, Europe and Russia, with sub-contracts for design houses with deliverables in China and Japan



Forty years on from the debut of the 308 GTB 'Vetroresina' – Ferrari's first ever mid-engined two-seater V8 – the manufacturer from Maranello has unveiled its latest evolution in its family tree: the Ferrari 488 GTB. Set to become physically unveiled at this year's Geneva Motorshow, the official images and technical specifications already promise one of the most desirable junior-hypercars of this decade.

Prior to comparing the Ferrari 488 GTB to its prime contemporary competitors from Sant'Agata, Stuttgart and Woking, one should take the time to come to terms with what exactly has happened in the past four decades at

Maranello. 227HP has grown to 670HP, torque has increased from 209lb ft to 560lb ft, top speed has increased from 158mph to 205mph and the 0-62mph sprint has been optimised from 6.1 seconds to 3 seconds flat. What an achievement!

Today the 488 GTB marks the 'entry level' mid-engined Ferrari and, similar to its California T sibling, introduces turbo-charging back into the Ferrari road car line-up. Professionals have already unanimously concluded that Ferrari's latest turbo engines are the



best in the world – BMW and Porsche turbo units included – and while having exiled 'turbo-lag' into classic car museums, have lost none of the aural appeal so essential to any product of the prancing horse.

Designwise Ferrari has continued its styling strategy of previous years. Ever since the 308 GTB, Ferrari has taken a larger styling step with every third model-generation, with the successor of the first becoming a direct visual derivative of the original design icon. As such, the Ferrari 328 was a styling evolution of the 308, the Ferrari F355 of the 348, the Ferrari F430 of the 360 and now the Ferrari 488 GTB from the 458; underlining that Ferrari's latest styling is a visual evolution of a previous icon.

The design of the Ferrari 488 GTB is a direct result of the lessons learned from the 'Speciale' derivatives of the 458 Italia and the technical necessity to feed sufficient air towards the new turbo engine. Although every exterior panel has been worked on, the most obvious changes are with the new aerodynamic front end and the panel ahead of the rear-wheels, where large 80s

Testarossa-like air intakes now dominate the previously clean flanks of the Italia original.

In many respects an elegant 458 Italia has become a brutal 488 GTB. Think beautiful woman coming out of a five-year boot-camp to prepare herself for a cage-fight in the Ultimate Fighting Championship series; there are still traces of the original beauty, but there is no way of hiding the biceps and six-pack now. As a result, there will be those who will find that the styling of the 488 GTB has become too 'Mansory', but for the majority of buyers this will not matter.

The majority of buyers care about the year of production, the list-price and the performance underneath the skin and while the 488 GTB will without any doubt keep the various Huracán Superleggeras, GT3 RSs and 675LTs at bay, the design-aficionados are probably going to hold their breath until 2020, when Flavio Manzoni and his team will be able to surprise us with a Ferrari mid-engined two-seater V8, one that will influence the styling of the successive decade of Ferrari supercars.





1952 FERRARI 212 EXPORT BARCHETTA Coachwork by Touring; Chassis no. 0158 ED

1974 LANCIA STRATOS HF STRADALE Coachwork by Bertone; Chassis no. 829AR0 001571

1985 FERRARI 288 GTO Chassis no. ZFFPA16B000052475



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DELAYED ALFAS

I too was interested in reading about the history of your 156 and like Clive Bakers 147 GTA (letters March 2015). I was the owner of an 'Australian' 156. Back in 2005 I was looking for a low mileage 156 2.5, as my daughter had a very nice black one at the time. Looking on *Auto Trader* to my surprise I came across a couple of new ones at Oakfields, a specialist dealership near Basingstoke and went to see them. They were both in Alfa red and both were automatic models, not Selespeed but the 'Q System'. So we did a deal and I became the owner of a new 156 V6 at a very good discount off the new price.

The dealer explained that the cars were part of a shipment of Alfas and Fiats from Italy that were onboard a ship that had been on fire shortly before docking in Australia. The vehicles were driven off the ship onto the dock and were inspected by the Fiat/Alfa Romeo agent and were condemned as unsaleable, due to fire or smoke damage.

Oakfields purchased a large number of 156 and 147 Alfa Romeos and they were transported to Southampton in 2005, my car was one of the last to be sold. He also had a

couple of 156 Sportwagons which had a slight smell of smoke but nothing he couldn't fix.

My car was then registered in Reading with the registration number RX05 OPH, Vin number ZARG3200001300512, it was a Veloce model with black leather and the facelift interior. It also came with the Handbook/Service book pack and an Australian supplement to the English handbook.

I contacted Alfa Romeo UK and gave them all the details of the car and they gave me a one year warranty, which I thought was a good result. I kept the 156 for three years and I have to say I had no problems at all, it was the most reliable car I had owned and my introduction to that beautiful V6 Busso engine.

Martin Hudson



FULVIA MAN

Happy 20th. Good to know that Wards, Collins, and Giordanelli are still around. I have been enjoying the recent efforts – the mixture of ancient and modern, the carrozzeria stories and the editorial fleet report which brings most of us back down to earth. As a Lancia and Montecarlo enthusiast I enjoyed the series on the Montecarlo

period competition cars.

I suspect that most readers are like me and lead mostly unspectacular motoring lives with just the occasional moment. Last year I attended the Nordic Lancia meeting in Denmark and I am thinking of the next Nordic in Finland this summer. I will think about your request for readers' cars or events.

Jim Godfrey



WEDDING FIAT COUPE

I'm currently enjoying my lovely 20v turbo, which is my fourth Coupe in 10 years of ownership. It's my daily driver, covering the 50 mile round-trip in style and with a glorious burble! I'm still not sure



how, but I also managed to get permission for the Coupe to make an appearance at my wedding last summer. It didn't quite get the honour of being the bridal car, but was good enough for me and my best man. I've attached a couple of photos that our wedding photographer took, he loved the car and made sure I found time to take him out for a quick spin.

Keep up the good work with the magazine and I'm hoping to get to one of your events this year.

Nick Smith

LISBON LANCIAS

I am a big fan of all Italian cars and have owned several exceptional ones,



a Fulvia Coupe, Delta integrale EVO 1, Alfa Romeo 164 V6TB, a 1954 Fiat 1100 elaborata, and lately an extremely rare Lancia Kappa Pininfarina Sportwagon 2.0 16V turbo. I have never seen any articles about the Kappa, in particular the Kappa Sportwagon.

The Kappa is extremely rare with just a few more than 9000 built covering all engines of which I believe there were six versions: 3.0 24V, 2.0 20V, 2.0 20V turbo, 2.4 20V, 2.4 TD, and 2.4 JTD.

I know that a few years ago when Gianni Agnelli visited Portugal in his beautiful America's Cup sailing boat, two Sportwagons were at his disposal parked at the Cascais Marina a few miles from Lisbon.

My Lancia, a 2.0 16V turbo, was built in 1997 and is fun to drive. It has luxurious Poltrona Frau interior. According to some specialists around 400 models were assembled by hand at Pininfarina. Could you confirm this?

**Gonçalo Cornelio da Silva
Lisbon**



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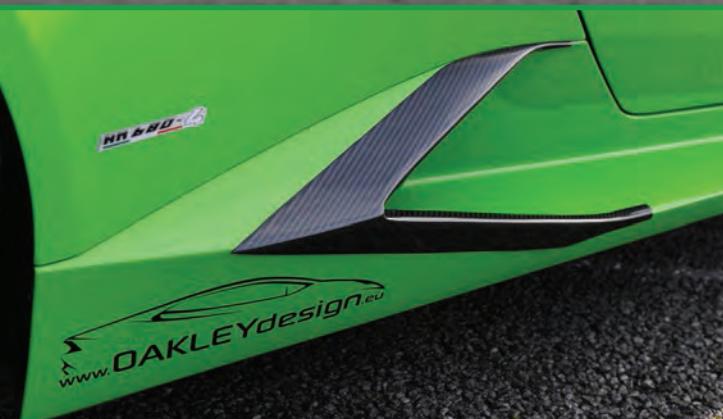
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Whirlwind Romance

It doesn't take long for newly released supercars to become personalised – but this one has been re-engineered

Test by Sean Carson
Photography by Michael Ward



My relationship with this raciest version of the new Lamborghini Huracán was brief. Those with eyes that'd shame a bird of prey will notice that the new smallest supercar from Sant'Agata is not wearing any registration plates, because it's going to Saudi Arabia – and before it flew away to its forthcoming dehumidified, temperature-controlled garage in the Middle East, *Auto Italia* got the chance to sample an enhanced version of Lambo's slice of more useable, everyday exotica.

Those with the ocular acuity that spotted the first anomaly will have also noticed that, visually, this doesn't look like a standard Huracán. That's because



British-based Oakley Design has already fully developed its package of modifications for the firm's Gallardo replacement.

EARLY DOORS

Gazumping many on the Lamborghini shortlist, Jon Oakley of Oakley Design managed to secure chassis number six from the initial production run – Oakley has had the car since September 2014 and has been busy stripping back, assessing and redesigning bits to improve the look and performance alike.

Far from a tuner that slaps a wrap on a supercar, Oakley is one of the most involved aftermarket customisation companies around. The depths it goes

to further develop an otherwise already impressive standard product from the Ferrari and Lamborghini spheres is lengthy.

Sure, it can construct a body kit with the best of them – and the aggressive carbonfibre additions here certainly tighten up the otherwise slightly flabby silhouette of the Huracán – but the effort that's gone on under the aluminium and carbon skin is just as extensive.

When Oakley took delivery of the Huracán its initial task was to plonk it on the scales. The result: the car was 181kg over weight. The factory quote 1420kg whereas the car delivered tipped the balance at 1601kg. Even accounting for Lamborghini's



Photo: Jo Kingman

measurements being dry and Oakley's with coolant and oil, that's a significant paunch over its claimed waistline. Which is why Oakley sent its Huracán on a lightweight diet, stripping 107kg out of the car.

SLIMFAST DIET

One of the largest reductions has stemmed from the fitment of a new, high-tech but lightweight battery. The standard power source weighs a whopping 31kg but the new lithium-ion pack comes in at just 2.5kg.

On top of that there's a redesigned 8kg titanium exhaust system that undercuts the standard 36kg stainless steel unit – and being slung out the back of the car and relatively high up, the reduction in polar mass means the gains are two fold in terms of vehicle dynamics.

A new set of ADV.1 wheels cut another 30kg when spec'd with the firm's newly developed, race-inspired centre-lock wheel option and, with a wider offset and tyre sizes identical to the Aventador, increases the Huracán's track front and rear to add a touch more mechanical grip.

Then there's the aero. Not only does the carbonfibre addenda add massive visual presence, making some areas of the Huracán that appear more rounded as standard more aggressive now, the modifications are genuinely beneficial on the road and on the track.

With plenty of experience from developing higher downforce bodywork for the Aventador, Oakley

actually had to change tack with the Huracán due to its body shape. The lighter, more extensive carbon diffuser works in conjunction with the profiled rear wing to add 36kg of aerodynamic grip at the rear compared to standard.

It's also massively more efficient, too. In the MIRA wind tunnel Oakley found the enclosed rear bumper was acting as a parachute for the air entering the car through the lower side radiator inlets. The open carbon lower bumper lets this high pressure air out, reducing drag, and gives a glimpse of that beautifully formed titanium exhaust. It glows bright red when hot – how cool is that?

The same is true for aerodynamic efficiency at the front – the numbers from the wind tunnel showed that, as standard, the Huracán is set up to give around 25kg of lift on the front axle at 155mph.

Safe handling for well-heeled supercar owners whose driving talent can't match the size of their credit line, so that at speed the car gives a gentle message and starts to push, rather than snapping into oversteer like a mid-engined supercar traditionally might.

The carbonfibre front splitter and nose cone Oakley has developed negates this lift and brings the front axle load back to neutral at high speed, adding even more confidence to what is a very sorted package.

There's an obsessive level of attention to detail employed here to develop these unseen performance gains, and that extends from the

ABOVE: No guess work here, the Huracán's aerodynamics were tested in MIRA's wind tunnel

engineering to the aesthetics.

The centre-lock wheel option took countless hours to develop, but it cuts yet more weight and adds to that race car vibe from the big front splitter, rear diffuser and wing combination – all painstakingly constructed from high-quality pre-preg carbonfibre, of course. Not cheap Chinese wet lay material.

In fact, the black woven stuff took three times as long to lay and bake than usual on this Huracán as the customer requested herring bone pattern throughout the car; from the front bumper, to the roof and rear wing, every contrasting panel that's visual is symmetrical about the part's centreline. It's a vast improvement over the standard car, with Oakley's modifications adding a dollop more visual tension outside and a heap more class inside the cabin.

Lamborghini has done a great job with the ergonomics and the tech, as the Huracán is properly usable – it's easy to get into and see out of, with loads of configurable displays – however, some of the materials leave a little to be desired in terms of quality.

The instrument cowl, gear shift paddles, air vents and centre console all boast gleaming, pristine lacquered carbon here, but in the standard Huracán it looks like a raging bull that's been neutered: what are highlights in Oakley's car are lowlights in the regular production version, with drab, black plastic coating most of the interior surfaces. Certainly not befitting of a £200,000 car.

You don't realise until you see the difference just how much some contrasting textures and bright green

flashes can lift an interior. It's beautifully judged by Oakley – just enough flamboyance without being totally over the top.

And while we're on the subject of attention to detail, you may have noticed the moniker on the wing endplates and brake calipers. The two letters are the initials of this car's new owner – a small but very neat touch that's crucial at this level in the marketplace – while the three numbers refer to something rather more exciting.

PERFECT 10

The '680' denotes the horsepower number that the Lambo's creamy, snarling 5.2-litre direct-injection V10 puts out after modifications. There's nothing significantly different to the standard motor, no new forged lightweight internals, just a thorough and comprehensive remap of the car's fuelling and ignition timing to extract the most from what is already a very fit power unit. Or so you would think...

When Oakley actually got the car on the dyno, running on poorer quality Saudi Arabian fuel like the liquid it'll drink in its new home, the Huracán was putting out just 540bhp.

The tweaks and massaging of the fuel and ignition curves have clawed back more than 120bhp to the point where it'll now hit 60mph from rest in just 2.5 seconds, making it as quick as Bugatti Veyron. That's a lot of performance for (relatively) not much money if you analyse it objectively. But it's how the Huracán does it that's so impressive.





ON THE ROAD

We have no track to test the true ferocity of the Huracán's uncorked malice, but actually, on a cool winter day with temperatures hovering around one degree, this is quite an enlightening test.

Lamborghini's of old were recalcitrant, unruly beasts that liked to be driven fast in fine conditions. Pootling around was not in their repertoire. Now, however, to sell supercars in the rarified atmosphere where price tags hover around the quarter of a million pound mark, mid-engined exotica needs to be useable everyday: low sun reflecting off the salt-slicked roads of Essex certainly stands as a good test in this regard.

And the Huracán performs well. The motor revs with incredible zip, spinning round to its redline with increasing ferocity as the revs rise towards a cacophonous crescendo of V10 exhaust wail. Lift off and you'll get a lovely crackle and pop as the merits of the titanium exhaust start to show. At full chat the gearbox is intoxicating and highlights the massive gulf in performance between the latest Lamborghini and the most successful model ever – the car it replaced, the Gallardo.

The new dual-clutch paddleshift 'box is effortless and so smooth, switching ratios imperceptibly – apart from the raucous symphony going on behind you. It's been reprogrammed to swap cogs 17% quicker than before, and the shifts really are lightning quick. It makes the most of the enhanced powertrain and is a perfect marriage of engineering trickery, driver involvement and theatre. Even in cold, slithery conditions there's immense traction on offer, with the wheels only starting to spin in the default Strada street setting towards the top of the rev range. Flicking to Corsa mode (the most extreme of three) with the steering wheel mounted toggle instantly sharpens up the throttle response, increases the weight of the

steering and how reactive the car is to your inputs.

Whereas before the Huracán felt docile and relaxed with plenty of latent performance, now it takes on a different character, like you've poked its pent up rage and it wants to vent. Now the wheels will spin more easily as the stability control loosens its grip on the 688bhp trying to overcome the adhesion provided by the huge 355-section rear tyres and the 255-section fronts. Stab the throttle pedal and it'll charge off with savage urgency, relentlessly trying to head butt the horizon with the exhaust note ripping the crisp winter atmosphere apart. It's visceral.

THE CUSTOMER'S ALWAYS RIGHT

More importantly, though, it's what the customer wants. Even if a member of Oakley's clientele requested the most garish combination of colours and materials the company can deliver it. Of course, it'd advise on what it thinks would work, but no challenge is too great. In some spheres Oakley unfairly gets criticised for being 'just' a tuning outfit that wraps cars – not so. Take a look at the better-than-factory finish at the join between the herring bone carbon roof and the front wing. The craftsmanship is immaculate.

How many tuning outfits do you know that can improve on the engineering might of Audi (Lamborghini's parent company), dragging back more than 120hp and stripping over 100kg of mass from the car, while still making it perfectly refined on the road and ballistic when you want it? I'll save you the trouble – not many have the inclination or skill to tweak a Ferrari or a Lambo. Oakley does, and how.

It's more than just cosmetic as its work in the wind tunnel shows. Oakley's considered approach keeps owners coming back for more, and with Lamborghini Miami having just ordered five new modified Huracán demonstrators, word is spreading fast. And so it should. 

BELOW: After its brief December appearance in chilly Essex, Oakley's Huracán left these shores for sunny Saudi Arabia



TALACREST



1972 FERRARI 365 GTC/4 SPYDER



OTHER SELECTED FERRARIS FOR SALE INCLUDE



1950 FERRARI 195 INTER



1967 FERRARI 275 GTB 4 CAM



1969 FERRARI 365 GTC



1964 FERRARI 250 GT LUSSO



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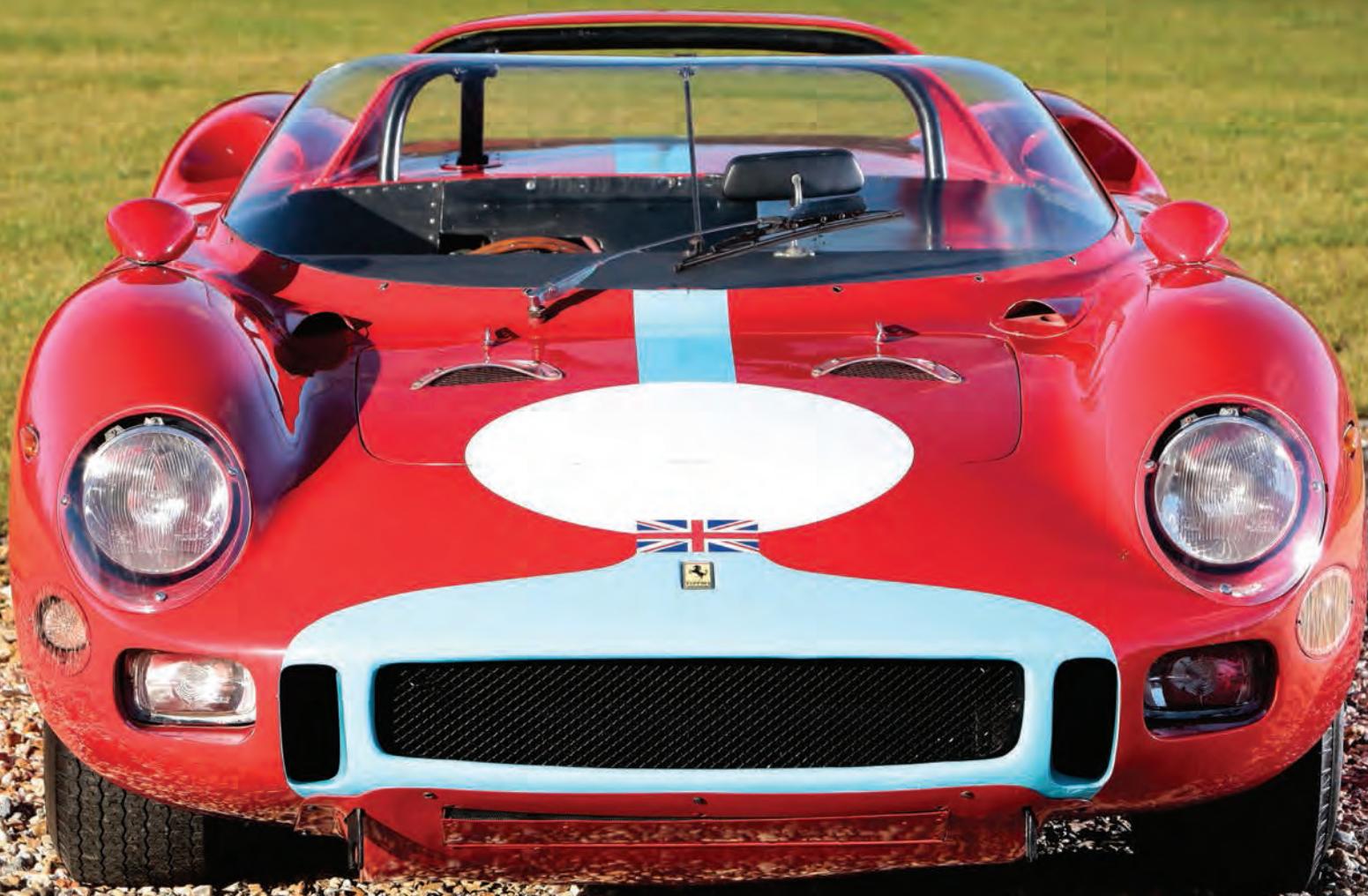


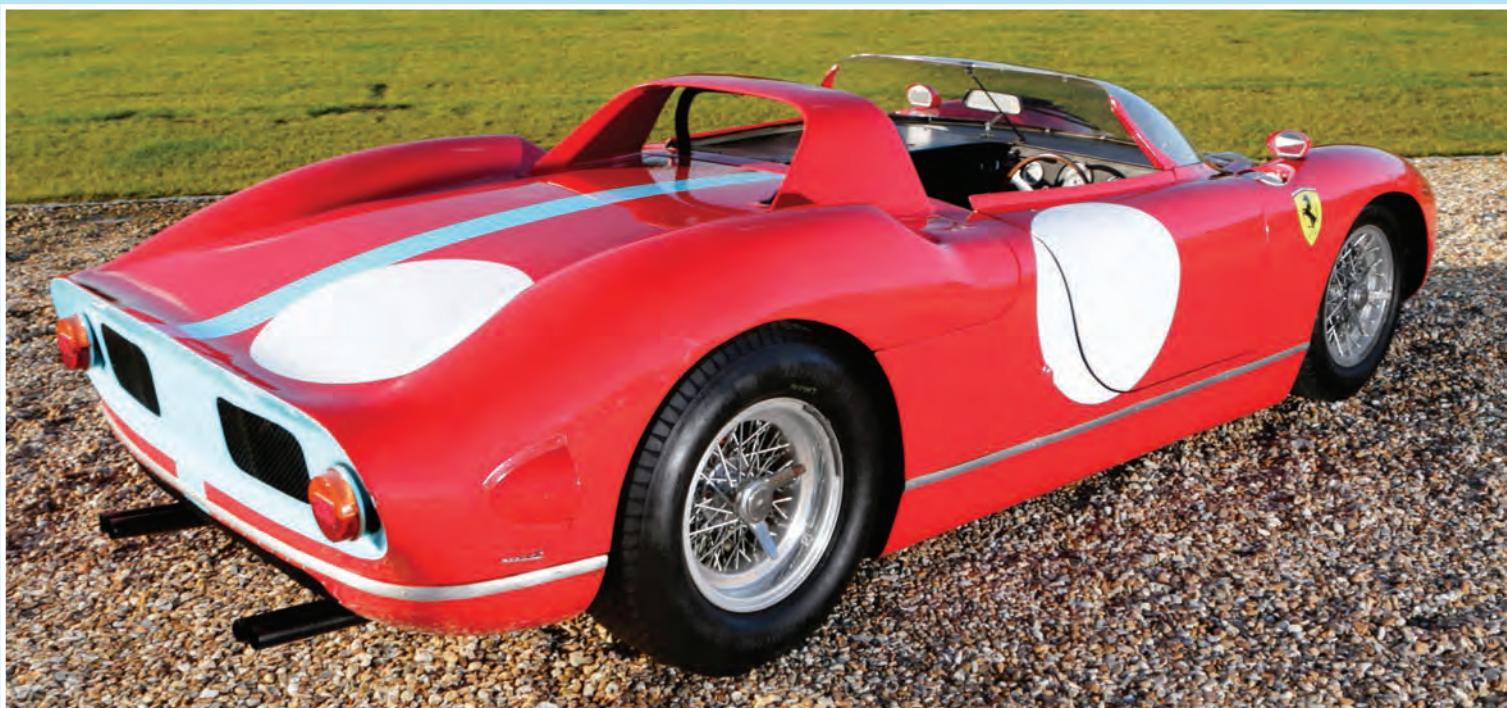
NUMBER ONE IN THE CLASSIC FERRARI MARKET

The Blue Stripe

Former Maranello Concessionaires Ferraris rarely change hands – this ex-Graham Hill 330 P has recently been released from captivity

Story by Peter Collins
Photography by Simon Clay





It is an incontrovertible fact that Enzo Ferrari, by his own admission, considered that the engine was the most important part of a racing car, and he insisted on the continuation of powerful, front-engined GP and sports prototypes until 1961. It could be argued that the beginning of the end of this policy started three days after August 29th 1957, when the talented engineer and test driver Andrea Fraschetti sadly lost his life at the Modena Autodrome, leaving the road while testing a Formula 2 car. According to Carlo Chiti's book *Sinfonia Ruggente*, only three days later Enzo Ferrari called the Alfa Romeo engineer and asked him to join the Scuderia at Maranello to fill the now vacant position of Chief Competition Engineer.

Chiti agreed and found, to his dismay, that there was no integrated organisation in the department, in other words, things were done on a 'that's the way they always have' basis. To an extent, this was fine, as it had reaped many rewards over the years but Chiti could see the disadvantages and, after the January 1958 Argentine Grand Prix, when Moss beat everyone in a little rear-engined Cooper belonging to Rob Walker, he found himself wondering how 'such a little car with so little horsepower could beat our much more powerful machines'. He wasn't alone in this as the great Belgian auto journalist Paul Frere, who won Le Mans in a Testa Rossa front-engined sports racer in 1960, is on record as saying that Enzo Ferrari 'just couldn't be bothered with aerodynamics'.

It wasn't just airflow though, but the many other points that were becoming vital on modern racing cars that Chiti was first concerned about when he arrived at Maranello. Things such as stiffer chassis, more efficient suspension and brakes were all in his mind as he became determined to drag Ferrari into the modern world.

Coincidentally, it was realised that the advantages of the rear engine location, namely a lower frontal area, lower centre of gravity, lower polar moment of inertia and smaller change in weight distribution as fuel was

used up, could equally be applied to Ferrari's sports racers. However, there was still stubbornness at Maranello along the lines of a Testa Rossa V12 behind the driver that would lead to an unwieldy beast of a car. So, when the first rear-engined sports prototype racer rolled out of the Ferrari race shop, it was found to have a Dino V6 in the back. At the annual Maranello Press Day on February 13th 1961, Enzo had to finally accept that motore posteriore was the way to go.

Two days after that Press appearance, Von Trips was out at the Modena Autodrome giving the 246 its first shakedown. Accelerating hard out of a tight left hand corner, as he turned into the next bend, the car went out of control and flipped, luckily harmlessly for its driver who was extracted without problem.

Ferrari test-driver Richie Ginther was summoned from California to sort the car out. On March 14th he set out on test at the high-speed Monza circuit and found the car very spooky indeed. It was lifting at speed and under acceleration to such an extent that the rear felt like it was skating. Negotiating the Curva Grande was almost impossible. Various ideas were tried by engineers Fantuzzi and Chiti who were present but it was Ginther, who had training in aeronautics, who considered the single fin behind the driver, similar to that of a Jaguar D Type, to be at fault. Before the end of the day he had convinced Chiti to fit an upturned spoiler of 15cm in height along the back edge of the rear deck. The problem was solved and the handling sorted. So Ginther had invented the rear-spoiler and Ferrari had embraced rear engines, all in one year.

Interestingly, although not well-known, it was the enthusiastic Carlo Chiti who actually rigged up an adjustable rear wing on the car at one stage but, because time was short and it showed no great advantage over the spoiler, it was taken off and forgotten about. It was six or seven years later when Forghieri resurrected the idea on the 1968 312 Grand Prix car and the rest is history.

That 246 sports prototype, with its Dino V6, was the start of a whole new line of championship winning cars

and they took the World Series in '61 and '62, by which time there was a desperate need for them to be updated. By this time Carlo Chiti and his colleagues had left Maranello and in their place Enzo promoted Ing. Mauro Forghieri. He decided that whatever new car was built, it needed a V12. It's possible that Enzo's view of large lumps of iron in the back of a car might upset the handling had eased somewhat after one of the sports prototypes had been fitted with a V8 with no obvious detrimental effect in that department.

So, another major phase of Ferrari history started in November '62 when John Surtees, world motorcycle champion recruited to replace Phil Hill first tested the V12 prototype at Modena. This car was a 1962 V6 Dino into which had been shoehorned a Testa Rossa 3 litre V12. Over that winter the car was developed through intense work and, for the '63 Press Day in early March, it appeared with a swoopy Pininfarina body and a 3-litre Testa Rossa type V12 as Tipo 250P. The successes continued and the four 250P built – chassis 0810/2/4/6, all with even numbers as they were competition cars – took another World Championship for Maranello with Ferrari also taking the top six places at Le Mans.

The plan from there on was extensive updating each year, ready for the next, but with a waste not want not approach, the previous year's cars were often rebuilt and mildly updated. They were often sold to private entrants in order to maintain the number of Ferraris on the grids. Enzo made sure not to give his customers the cars that might have the potential of beating the works entries however, for them he had also developed the 250 LM.

So, for 1964, the P concept was extended with larger engines for the factory cars, so there were 275 and 330 P cars – in other words, with 3.3-litre or 4-litre V12s. These larger power units were mainly as

a response to the entry of Ford and their large engined GT40 sportscars.

Three of these '64 cars were built and numbered 0818/20/22 and here we are concerned with the first, and the car in this feature, 0818. Whereas the 275 engine was a bored out 250 with the same 58.8mm stroke as had been utilised for many years, the 330 not only enjoyed the extra bore, but the stroke was extended to 71mm as well, making 3967cc. Ferrari claimed 370bhp at 7200rpm for the latter unit, fed by carburettors. Not many other changes were made to the 330 over the 250 except wider wheels, with 6in instead of 5in at the front and 7.5in instead of 6.5in at the rear and altered bodywork. Both types retained a 2400mm wheelbase chassis.

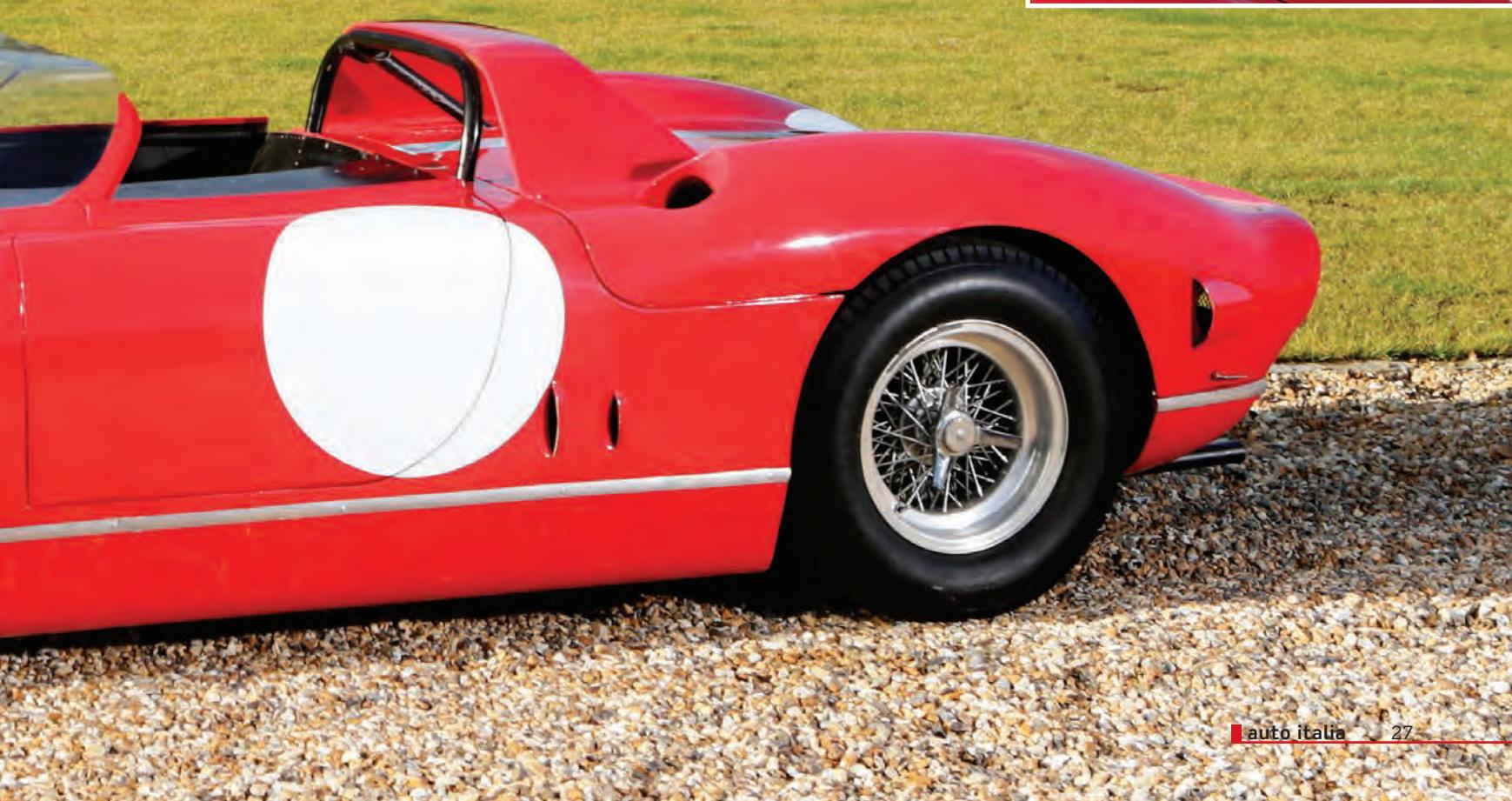
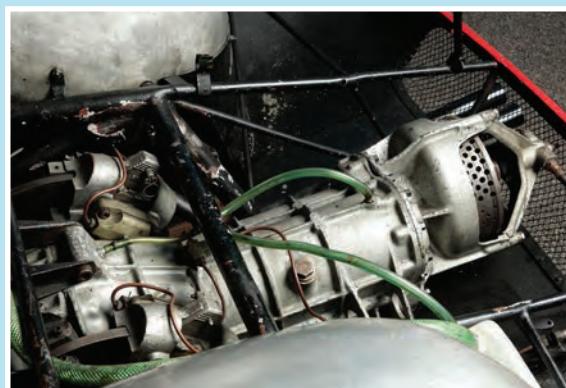
It was a 330 engine that went into the back of our featured 0818 and the car was sent to the March 1964 Sebring 12 Hours race in Florida for Maranello Concessionaires UK, run by the legendary Col. Ronnie Hoare. It was this race that introduced the world to the beautiful racing colours of red with a Cambridge Blue stripe. This came about because the car was delivered to Sebring with a British Racing Green stripe and Hoare was superstitious of green so had it changed immediately to the blue, which were the colours of F English, Hoare's Ford dealership in Bournemouth. It became the trade-mark of his cars.

Doug Nye in *The Colonels Ferraris* quotes Hoare as saying that the cars were offered to Concessionaires on a fixed-tariff for maintenance and preparation and the cars themselves were sisters to the works vehicles, but maintained by the Assistenza workshops rather than the works racing shop. Graham Hill and Jo Bonnier were taken on as Team drivers and they immediately took a front row grid position, being beaten in qualifying only by the factory pairing of John Surtees and Lorenzo Bandini. Once the race had settled

RIGHT: 0818 was one of three cars to be fitted with a 4-litre V12. Ferrari claimed 370bhp at 7200rpm



FERRARI 330 P







down, 0818 was running easily second and at one time ran in the lead but sadly, after 7 hours of the 12, a gearbox oil leak forced the car to retire.

As 0818 was being works prepared for Le Mans, the team did not use it again until the titanic battle at La Sarthe rolled around in June. At the start of the race Graham Hill settled into second place and is quoted as saying that it was good to be in a car at Le Mans that could win the race; "...you can always reckon that if you've got a Ferrari you should be in at the finish..." Niggling problems delayed them, like condenser failure and a broken throttle cable, but they finished second overall behind the works Ferrari of Guichet/Vaccarella.

Even better was to come as wins were taken in the Tourist Trophy at Goodwood, with Hill alone at the wheel and the Hill/Bonnier pairing made it a second win at the Paris 1000 Kms at Montlhéry in October. A third was at the little-known Ettore Bettoja Trophy race at Monza a couple of weeks after Paris. This race was a test to see if the Monza 1000 Kms was feasible

in 1965 and 0818 won it with Ludovico Scarfiotti at the wheel. 1965 witnessed two DNFs for 0818. Firstly at Monza, with fuel pump problems and then at the Reims 12 Hours with gearbox failure.

By this time, the Colonel had a new P2 at his disposal and he purchased 0818 from the factory at the end of the '64 season. The latter was sold on to Jaguar man Dick Protheroe towards the end of '65 and, in accordance with Ferrari factory updating procedures, it was converted into a P2 for 1966.

Very sadly Dick crashed it, first time out, at Oulton Park in practice for the '66 TT and succumbed immediately to his injuries. After many years, a rebuild and travels to the UK and the USA 0818 returned to the hands of Fabrizio Violati and his San Marino Ferrari collection. In 2006 a Ferrari Classiche Certificate was issued for the car. Following Sig Violati's death, the San Marino collection has now been split up and 0818 is back in the UK with Talacrest, coincidentally only minutes from its original owner's premises.

ABOVE: The blue stripe is said to be the same shade as the Anglia saloons sold at Ronnie Hoare's Ford dealership in the 1960s



Maranello Concessionaires

by Keith Bluemel

Maranello Concessionaires was founded by Colonel Ronnie Hoare in 1960, after he had agreed with the principal of the late Mike Hawthorn's TT Garage, the previous concessionaire, that he could approach Ferrari about handling the concession for the British market.

A meeting with Girolomo Gardini, the commercial manager at Ferrari, at the Brussels Salon in January 1960 led to a meeting with Enzo Ferrari when the deal was signed. Maranello Concessionaires Ltd was incorporated on 1st April 1960, and

officially started trading in July, when the Colonel received delivery of the first car ordered, a pale blue 250 GT SWB berlina, chassis number 1993 GT, for his personal use.

The company initially operated out of two bays at the Colonel's Ford dealership in Bournemouth, with a London service centre being opened in Chiswick in 1964. This arrangement continued until 1967, when a lease was taken out with Shell on Tower Garage on the Egham by-pass, a site that has since become synonymous with Ferrari, and which is now occupied by Maranello Sales Ltd.



Ferrari 250 GTO Ch. 4399

Perhaps the most famous car in the Maranello fleet. Raced throughout 1963 by Mike Parkes, Jack Sears and Graham Hill. Rebodied at the end of the season and raced again in 1964 and 1965. It was sold in June 1965 and then obtained by Sir Anthony Bamford in 1969 who has raced it extensively ever since.

Ferrari 330 LMB Ch. 4725

Three cars were prepared to run at Le Mans in 1963 and 4725 was the only one to finish. It came home in 5th place and first in class driven by Jack Sears and Mike Salmon. Later in the same year it was raced in the Brands Hatch Guards Trophy by Lorenzo Bandini. 4725 is unique in that it is right-hand drive. It never ran with the blue stripe. It is currently for sale at Talacrest and has been repainted yellow.

Ferrari 275 GTB Ch. 9035

This lesser-known Maranello Concessionaires team car ran just once carrying the famous blue stripe. It was entered in the June 1966 Nürburgring 1000Km for Roy Pike and Piers Courage but was withdrawn. It was more successful with the same drivers at Le Mans and finished 8th overall and first in class.



Ferrari 412 P Ch. 0854

Generally regarded as one of the most beautiful of all Ferraris, the Maranello Concessionaires 412P looked even more spectacular with its blue stripe. It was raced in just one season, in 1967, driven by Lucien Bianchi, Richard Attwood, Piers Courage, David Piper and Jo Siffert. It was sold to David Piper at the end of the season. It subsequently changed hands several times and is currently in a USA collection.





Ferrari 250 LM Ch. 5907

One of the three LMs raced by Maranello Concessionaires. This one competed in the 1964 season driven by Graham Hill, Roy Salvadori, Jo Bonnier and David Piper. It was sold to the obscure UK Team Chamaco Collect and was raced in 1965 in the UK and South Africa. It then spent several years in the USA before returning to Europe in 2005.



THE RACE CARS

The famous blue stripe appeared on many but not all of the Maranello Concessionaires Ferraris. One notable exception was the 330 LMB that ran at Le Mans in 1963

Ferrari 250 GT SWB	Ch. 2119
Ferrari 250 GT SWB	Ch. 2417
Ferrari 250 GTO	Ch. 3589
Ferrari 250 GTO	Ch. 2647
Ferrari 250 GTO	Ch. 3729
Ferrari 250 GTO	Ch. 4399
Ferrari 246 SP	Ch. 0790
Ferrari 330 LMB	Ch. 4725
Ferrari 330 P	Ch. 0818
Ferrari 250 LM	Ch. 5895
Ferrari 250 LM	Ch. 5907
Ferrari 250 LM	Ch. 6167
Ferrari 365 P2	Ch. 0826
Ferrari Dino 206S	Ch. 006
Ferrari Dino 206S	Ch. 010
Ferrari Dino 206S	Ch. 012
Ferrari Dino 206S	Ch. 0835
Ferrari 275 GTB	Ch. 9035
Ferrari 412 P	Ch. 0854
Ferrari 365 GTB/4	Ch. 15681
Ferrari 348 Challenge	Ch. N/A



Ferrari 365 GTB/4 Ch. 15681

The team stopped racing in 1967 but re-formed for Le Mans in 1972. Like many dealer teams the 365 GTB/4C 'Daytona' was the popular choice. Maranello entered Ch. 15681, which sadly retired with reported piston failure. This car is still in the UK and owned by Sally and Dudley Mason-Styron. It is driven regularly in historic events

Ferrari 348 Challenge

The Maranello colours reappeared briefly on a 348 Challenge car in 1994. The Ferrari Challenge ran from 1993 to 1995 and included an Italian and European series. The 348 Challenge cars were race prepared but were intended to be used on the road and driven to the events by their gentleman owners.



All Present and Correct

A story of the detailed research and attention to detail required to make this Maserati a concours winner

Story by Andy Heywood
Photography by Michael Ward



For many years there was only one real reference book on Maserati. The 1982 volume 'Maserati – a complete history from 1926 to present' was written by Luigi Orsini with photographs from the extensive collection of Franco Zagari. Orsini's studious approach to his subject and level of detail was commendable and it was an important work to have written while many of the main protagonists of the Maserati story were still alive. Notwithstanding a slightly ill-judged English translation, I have referred to and relied on this book on many

occasions over the years. And yet, in the case of this particular car, it is wrong.

Orsini must have had access to the Maserati factory archive to be able to compile lists of individual chassis number histories for many of the early cars, including the A6G54 series. This particular car is chassis 2181 and he recorded its build date as 28/3/1956 and the body as 'Frua Spyder'. Yet as is plain to see, the car is not a Spyder but a coupe.

By the mid-1950s the coachbuilder Pietro Frua was already enjoying a fruitful relationship with Maserati.



Some of the first series of A6G cars with single-cam straight-six engines had been bodied by Frua, mostly as Spyders but with one as a Coupe. When Maserati announced the second series of A6G cars in 1954, now with a twin-cam engine, Frua continued to body both Spyders and Coupes – in all making a further 10 Spyders and actually six Coupes if you include this one.

So how did Orsini make a rare mistake? Looking at the build sheet for 2181 today, it is easy to speculate why. Maserati build sheets of the period were typed forms, filled in by hand. It clearly states Cabriolet as

the body type for this car, but then this is lightly pencilled through and a tiny correction in the margin says approximately; 'Orsi ordered change to Coupe'. It appears that the order was changed at the last minute and Orsini failed to spot the correction. But something else does not make sense; the build sheet quotes the completion date as 5/12/1956 and Orsini quotes it as 28/3/1956. He also notes that the car was presented at the 1956 Turin Show, which took place in October. The current Adolfo Orsi is quoted as confirming that the chassis left Maserati to go to Frua



for the body to be made in August, which means it cannot possibly have been the show car. Perhaps the details of this car and another were mixed up, but then none of the other Frua cars made before this time had the same colour scheme and surely it would have been obvious at the show which car it was. Alas, it is not obvious today and we may just have to add this to the list of conundrums that Maserati historians face when examining this period.

What we do know (thankfully) is that the completed car was exported early in 1957 to San Francisco. Charles Rezzaghi, a dealer in Italian cars, was by all accounts a larger than life character as well as being pivotal in the West Coast racing scene. His Motor Show stands were packed with eye-watering selections of racing cars from Ferrari, Maserati and OSCA and it was logical that he would also deal in the A6G54 cars when

they came along. Referring to Orsini once again, it appears that the majority of A6Gs that went stateside were handled by Rezzaghi. Alas, all that remains in reference to 2181 from that era are some photographs of the car taken in the paddock at Pomona Raceway in 1957. It looks stunning in these early colour shots and for those of you wondering, it is definitely a Coupe. These photos were a godsend during the restoration of the car but the identity of the photographer and even the owner of the car around that time remain unknown.

Charles Rezzaghi died in 1966 and both his company and any early history of 2181 died with him. The car next surfaced in the early 1980s, still on the West Coast, at a Maserati Club International meeting at Lake Tahoe. Looking fundamentally the same on the outside, there is however reference to it having the engine and transmission from a later Maserati 3500 GT.

BELow: It took many man hours to restore the extensive chrome work to concours standards



MASERATI A6G54 COUPE





What seems sacrilegious now was common practice in the '60s and '70s. The delicacy of the original A6G engines meant that they needed an experienced hand at service time and access to original spare parts, neither of which were easy to find in the USA. And even if they had been, the cars were worth nothing. Only an eccentric would want to persevere at all. Luckily for us today, a few of those eccentrics did persevere and at least 2181 received a Maserati 'upgrade', rather than some of the others which acquired American V8s.

However, after this one show, the trail again goes dead. There is mention of the original engine, which passed through the hands of many of the owners of other cars as a spare but currently its whereabouts is unknown. The car finally surfaced in 2007 when it was sold to a new German owner, whose intention was restoration. The pictures of the car as shipped from the USA show it to be incredibly original in terms of body and trim but still with the 3500 GT mechanicals.

While at a glance the 2.0-litre straight-six A6G engine and the 3.5-litre straight-six 3500 GT engine are very similar, the latter is physically a much larger engine requiring modification to the chassis and the bulkhead of the A6G in order to fit. The transmission tunnel had also been enlarged to take the five-speed ZF gearbox from the 3500 GT instead of the 4-speed Maserati original and even the Salisbury axle and Jaeger instruments from the later car had found its way under the rear of the Frua Coupe. I almost dare not suggest it but the car must have been good fun to drive like this. The 3500 GT engine was a far more accomplished power unit than the A6G, delivering another 70bhp and much more torque.

But alas, the era for Maserati hot-rods is over. These days, originality is everything and over the next few years, a huge effort was made on the part of the German owner and his restorer to acquire enough original parts to complete the car.

Clearly the most crucial part to find would be an original engine and in fact the car was sold to the German collector with the original engine block for 2104, another Frua-bodied A6G. This was the key to starting a long-term restoration that would not really be completed until 2014.

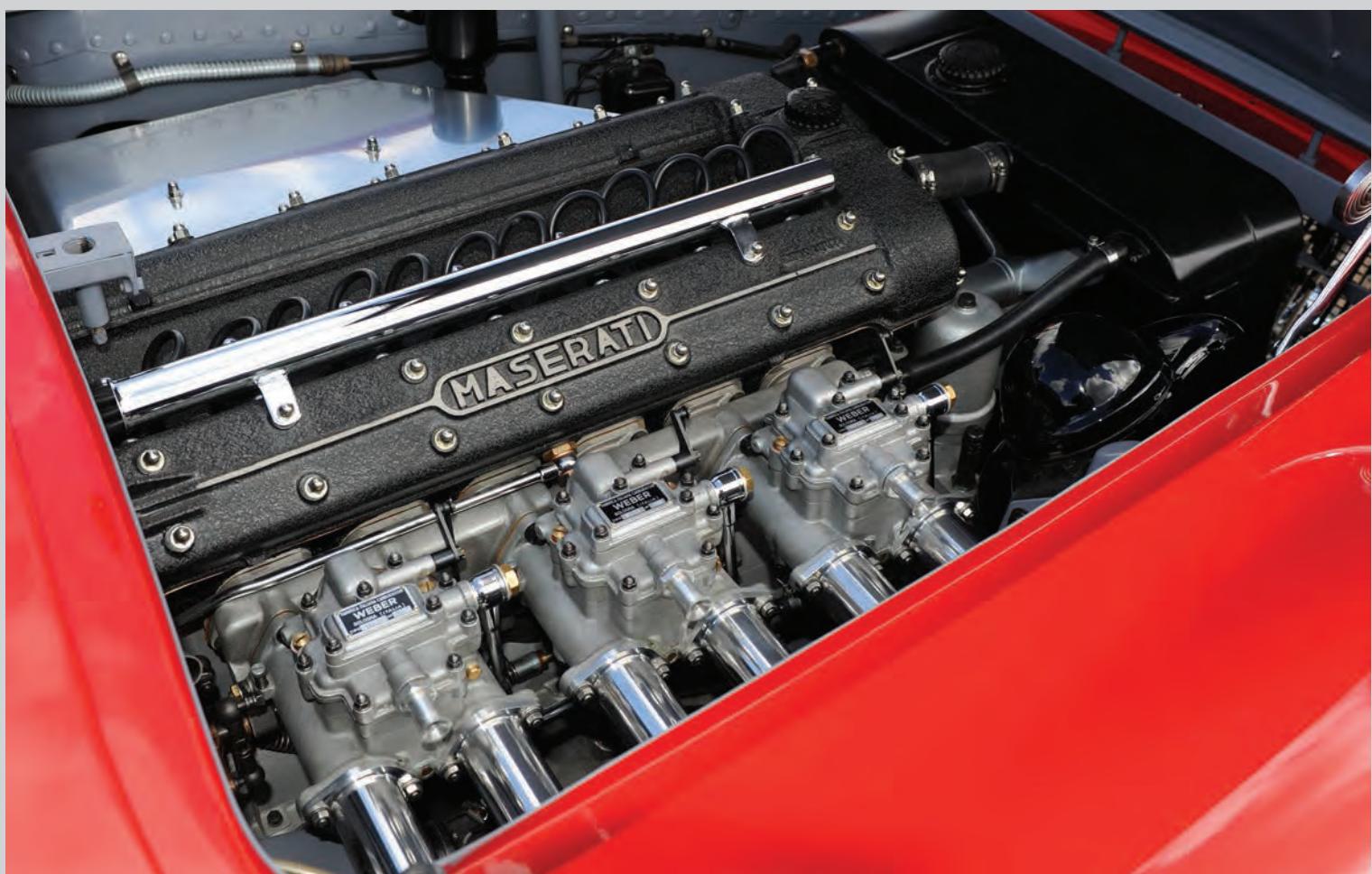
The body and trim restoration took place at respected Italian specialists, while German restorers busied themselves with the mechanical parts. By 2012, they had a complete car that ran but still with many incorrect details. At that point, the German collector had a change of heart and the project was offered for sale.

Fittingly the new owner was an American and also an existing customer of McGrath Maserati in the UK for whom we had already mechanically restored another A6G Zagato. The Frua Coupe arrived at McGrath in late 2012 and for the next few months, the project seemed to be going backwards. Our brief was to make the car as original as possible and good enough for the Pebble Beach Concours, which meant starting again in many areas.

While the body and paint were beautiful on the outside, the engine bay and underside had been repainted without removing some of the modifications left over from the replacement engine. It meant some painstaking work filling in holes and re-painting without damaging the lovely exterior. All of the chrome had to

ABOVE: After its sojourn at McGrath's in Hertfordshire, the car won the Maserati Centennial Coachwork award at Pebble Beach

MASERATI A6G54 COUPE



be done again as did the interior trim. What appeared to be minor defects led to major work to rectify. For instance, once rebuilt, the cylinder head had not been painted in the distinctive black crackle finish – it had been left bare which would only be correct on a racing Maserati. The implication of this was that the engine came out and the cylinder head was removed so that it could be painted. Fortunately this also revealed numerous problems with the build of the engine that could then be put right. Scouring the world for items like door latches, headlight rims, brake fluid reservoirs and electric horns became the order of many days of work, but eventually the project neared a conclusion.

The new owner had always insisted that while Pebble Beach was the target, he also wanted a car that was good to drive and while this was inevitable part of post-restoration fettling it presents the restorer with something of a dilemma in terms of not wanting the car to pick up even the most minor stone chip, it is also a huge privilege to drive a car like this. This was the first time that the car had been used with an A6G engine since at least the early 1980s and probably earlier than that. And certainly the first time the car had been seen in the UK.

The most well-known of the Frua Coupes in the UK in recent times is 2114, the car owned and campaigned for many years by Jay Kay, having been the subject of a McGrath restoration in 2002. This 1955 car was quite different in body style to 2181, being a much earlier Frua design. The design of the Coupes changed in line with that of the Spyders, and 2181 therefore looks similar to the last incarnation of Spyder. Yet it was not the last, as in 1957 there was a sister car, chassis 2194. On this one, Orsini made no mistake but apart from a reference to the car having 'starred' in an

eccentric French film in 1958 called 'Le temps des oeufs dur', nothing is known and it has since disappeared.

There is of course one other car that connects the earlier style of 2114 and the later 2181 version and that has recently been 'discovered' in France. As I write, the car has just been sold in Paris at the Retromobile auction and another owner and restorer are now about to begin a 'journey' that might also end at Pebble Beach. 2181 was successful; winning the special centenary class for coachbuilt Maseratis in 2014 and in a sense came home to the West Coast, back to the place and condition it was in when photographed at Pomona in 1957.

These are all pieces in the great Maserati jigsaw, some of which are still missing. It was to Luigi Orsini's great credit that as long ago as the early 1980s he started the process of setting the record straight. Inevitably that leads to some mistakes, but from those mistakes, greater knowledge often comes. Maybe one day the jigsaw will be complete, though part of me hopes this is never the case. After all, a little bit of mystery is all part of the Maserati magic. 





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Close Encounters

An explanation of the myths and legend that surround the Alfa Romeo Disco Volante

Story by Ruote classiche/Alessandro Barteletti
Photography by Paolo Carlini





Man has not touched ground on the moon yet, neither has he conquered space, although he's already broken the sound barrier. Orson Welles' aliens have long invaded the Earth. Epic undertakings, science fiction and numberless episodes of UFO sightings stirred up collective imagination in the 1950s.

In June 1952 a mysterious object was spotted circulating on the Monza racetrack. The press literally went crazy about the unknown terrestrial object when it was unveiled by Alfa Romeo and Carrozzeria Touring. The abundance of headlines and columns written at the time accounted for the wonder and the surprise for a truly original and innovative project which editors outlined as unique, daring and foolish. The prototype embodied the search for creativity and aerodynamic perfection and drew its inspiration from the myths of its time.

Regardless of whether this creation is viewed from above, below or from the side, the car's shape always looks different, the volumes and proportions are always new. These pages show the 1953 coupe preserved at the Alfa Romeo museum. It is a one-off prototype and features a 2-litre engine. Strange enough, but the wonderfully designed car that goes under the evocative name of 'Disco Volante' (Flying Saucer) is shrouded in mystery, partly because precious files were burnt in a fire after Carrozzeria Touring closed down in 1969, partly because the launch was marked as Top Secret.

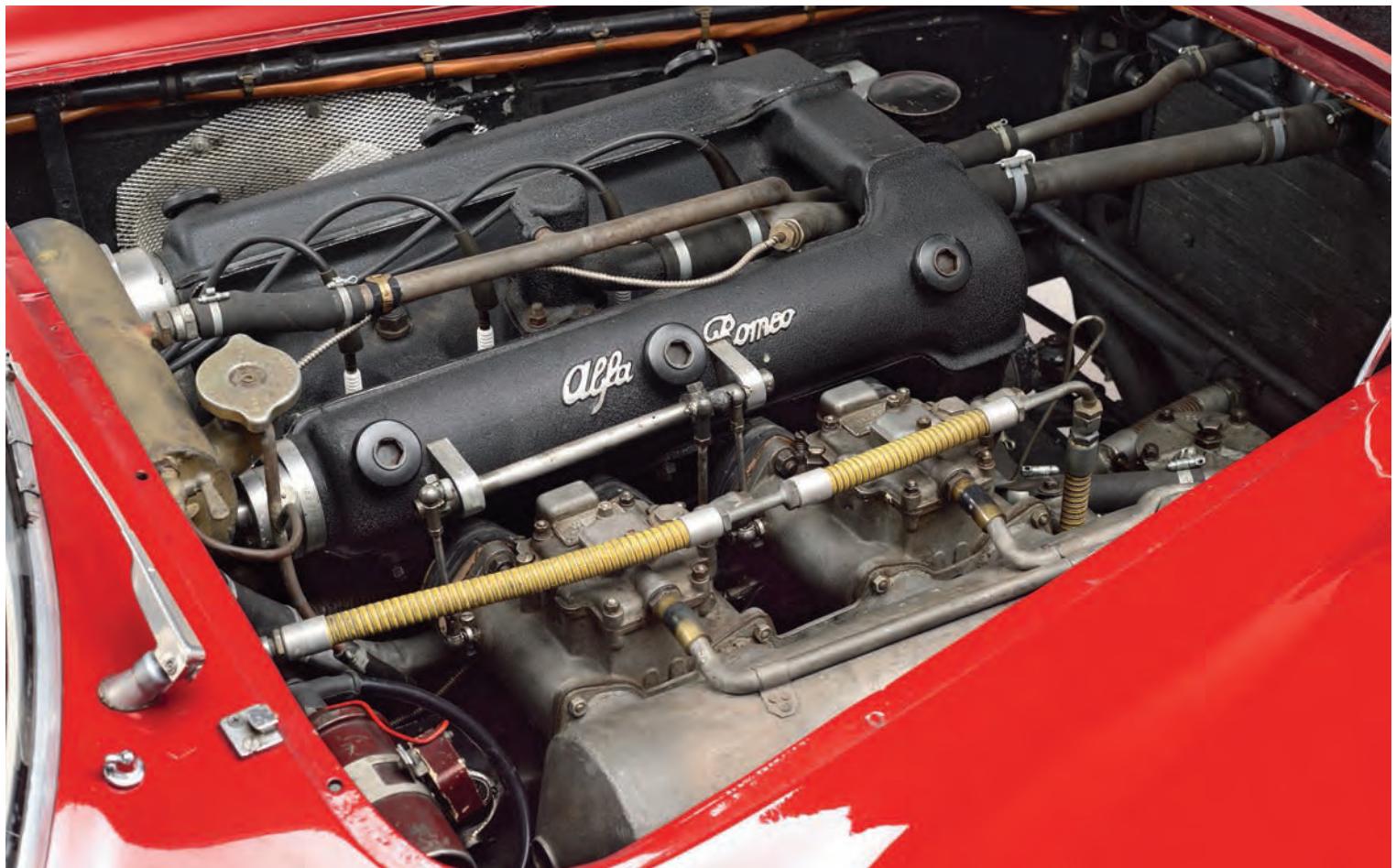
Here we recount the story with the help of Carlo Felice Bianchi Anderloni's memoirs (1916-2003), collected in the publication 'Disco Volante' by Automobilia. Today Anderloni's sons Giovanni and Alberto are both engaged with the compilation of the international Registry of Touring Superleggera.

The 'Area 51' in which the Disco Volante took form was home to Carrozzeria Touring. During this period Touring specialised in concept cars and one-offs and was widely known for its capability to deliver unique cars with excellent aerodynamics.

"Our enemy is weight, our obstacle is resistance to air". Since the beginning of operations this was the motto of the Atelier. Sketches were kept secret and Touring's design team worked closely with Alfa Romeo technicians. Gioacchino Colombo and two of his best collaborators coordinated the Disco Volante project on behalf of Alfa Romeo. Touring handed on the work to Carlo Felice Bianchi Anderloni and to Federico Formenti, who were responsible for Touring's Centro Stile. Pasquale Gallo, the president of the Biscione, was occasionally allowed to observe and offer his contribution.

The close collaboration of the two teams was crucial to the success of the project, and they worked out the best way to adapt the chassis to accept the bodywork. Touring's Superleggera technique involved the construction of a skeleton of thin steel tubes that were soldered together, dressed with a light alloy 'skin' and subsequently attached to the chassis.

Developed from 1952's open Barchetta type body, the solitary coupe version of the Disco Volante arrived later in 1953, when Rudolph Hruska joined the team after Colombo had left the Portello. The Austrian engineer had successfully worked with Porsche, Auto Union and Cisitalia which, 20 years later, would sign the innovative project of the front-wheel drive Alfasud. Hruska fell in love with the futuristic car and suitably encouraged he created two versions. Assembly of the so-called 'narrow-hipped' open model was relatively easy as it was a case of simplifying the spider and turning it into a more compact and manageable car. On



the other hand, the coupe version was manufactured by fitting the 1952 Disco Volante with a narrow roof, which narrowed further to the top to keep the main section down to the minimum and considerably improve the aerodynamics.

Manufactured using existing resources, with respect of tradition and know-how typical at Portello in those days, the Disco Volante was advertised as a 'family car and a race winner'. The engine was derived from the series 1900. Portello's engineers ingeniously increased the displacement from 1884cc to 1997cc by increasing the bore and converted the four-cylinder engine into a small, powerful 158bhp monster. During the tests on Monza's race track, Consalvo Sanesi lapped the Disco Volante spider at an average speed of 164km/h and with a top speed of 220km/h.

Bianchi Anderloni said: "Appetite comes with eating", hinting at a further version with a 20cm extended wheelbase and equipped with a six-cylinder 3-litre engine. It had a proposed average speed of 177km/h and 240km/h top speed. This unit was one of the three engines manufactured at the end of the 1940s for a study of the Tipo 1950 project, namely the 6C 3000, which was heir to the 6C 2500, which had been set aside.

Perhaps due to the impressive performance at Monza and perhaps after the wait for a return of Alfa Romeo to the world of racing (earlier in 1950 and 1951 Alfa had already snatched world championship at the new-born but already prestigious Formula 1), the press pinned down the Disco Volante as a car destined to racing. However, no "Flying saucer" was ever to

ABOVE: Alfa engineers increased the capacity of the stock engine to 1997cc
BELow: The unique Coupe often appears at events like the Silver Flag hillclimb



ALFA ROMEO 1900 DISCO VOLANTE





ABOVE: Disco Volante Coupe ch. 00003 resides at the Alfa Romeo museum along with Spider ch. 00001

compete (except for a few occasional private attempts of the 'narrow-hipped' version). Rather, the Disco Volante was rather a laboratory car, an exercise of style and – as we would say today – a smart marketing exercise. For many years clients (especially from the United States) sent letters in which they repeatedly asked when they could finally place their order for one of those running 'unidentified flying objects'. 



PRODUCTION HISTORY

The name 'Disco Volante' was registered by Touring on behalf of Alfa Romeo in the autumn of 1952. Alfa could use the name at its discretion, which has caused some confusion as the name has often been used to indicate a larger family of cars including the subsequent 3000 CM designed by coachbuilders Colli and Boano.

Little reliable information and numerous myths surround the family of five prototypes dressed by Touring in the years 1952-53.

Chassis no. 1359.00001

Engine: Four-cylinder, 2-litres
Body: Spider body
Museum Alfa Romeo, Arese

Chassis no. 1359.00002

Engine: Four-cylinder, 2-litres
Body: 'narrow-hipped' spider
Private collection

Chassis no. 1359.00003

Engine: Four-cylinder, 2-litres
Body: Coupe
Museum Alfa Romeo, Arese

Chassis no 1359.00011

Engine: Six-cylinder, 3-litres
Body: Spider
Museo dell'Automobile, Torino

Chassis no.1359.00012

Engine: Six-cylinder, 3-litres
Body: Spider
Unknown background

Data sourced from: 'Disco Volante', published by Automobilia 1993



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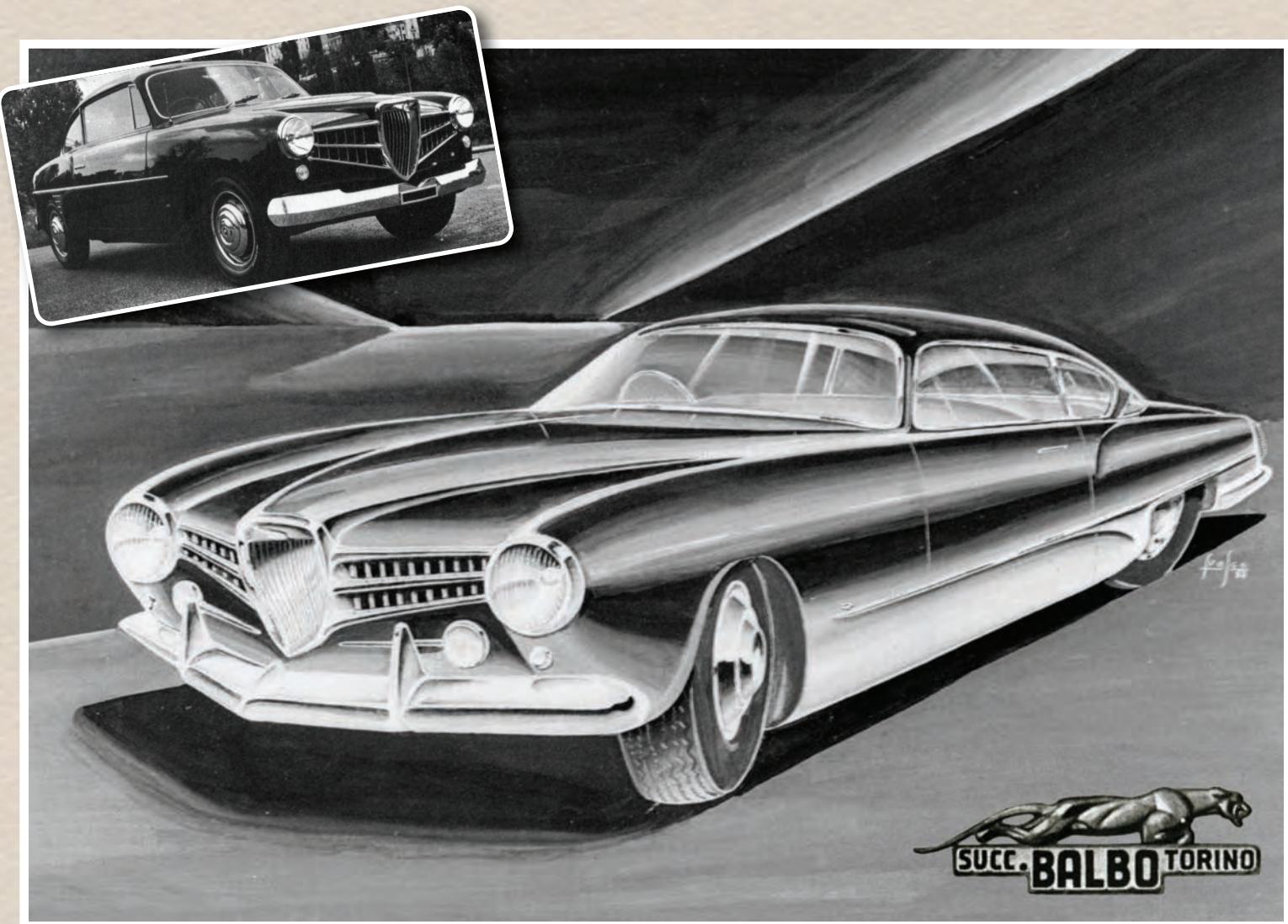
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Carrozzeria Balbo

Largely unattributed because it worked for major manufacturers, Balbo's profile was enhanced when it became associated with prominent designers

Story and pictures by Elvio Deganello



Carrozzeria Balbo attracted the attention of admirers of beautiful cars and received a good reputation but only after the Second World War. It was during the post-war period that Balbo broke away from current fashions and began to pursue innovative style in association with young designers like Giovanni Michelotti and Franco Scaglione.

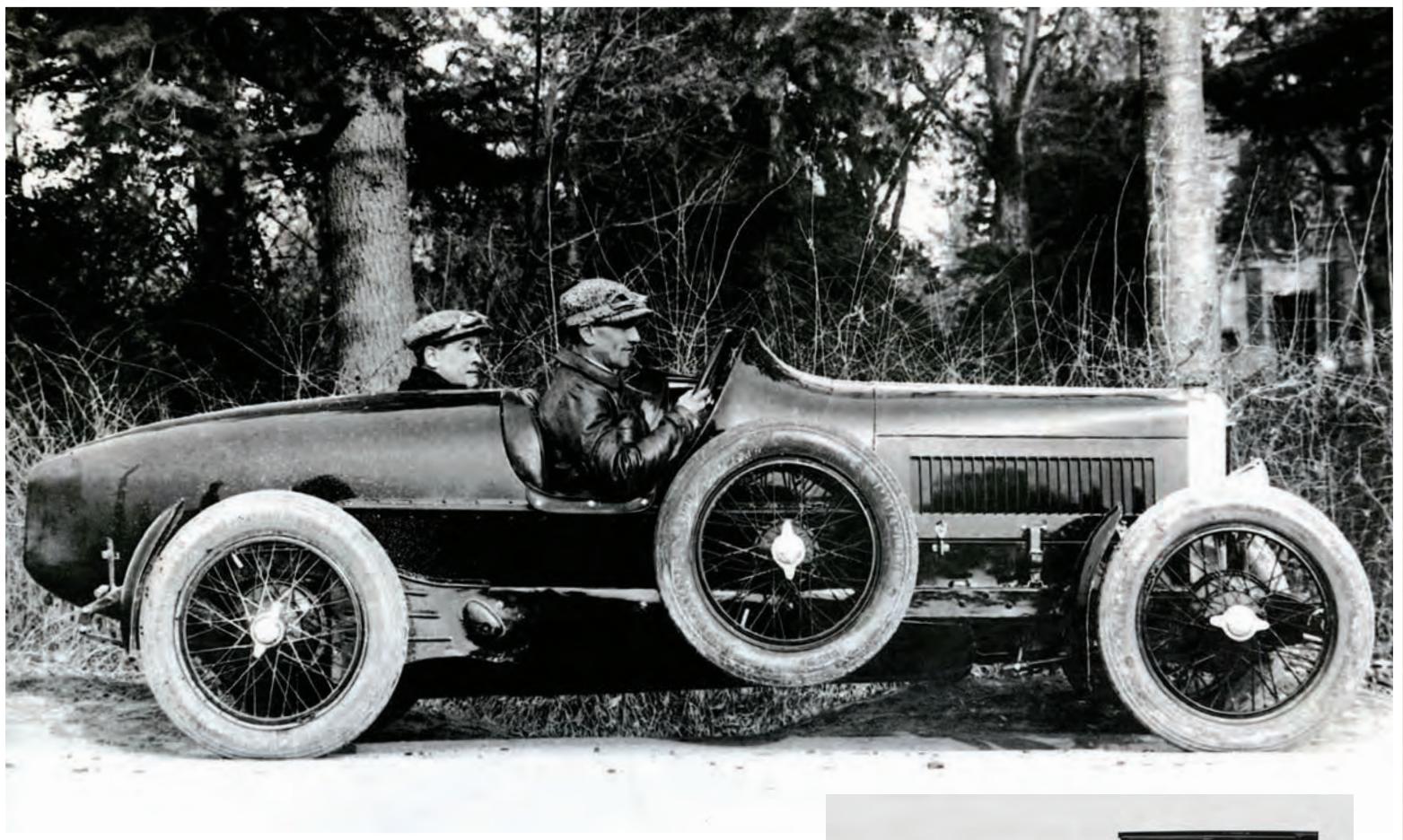
The company was founded in 1913 by Alfonso Balbo at Corso Parigi 78 in Turin. At first Balbo did not receive a great deal of exposure because the company was operating in the shadows of the big manufacturers. In

practice, some coachbuilders and often designers were not officially attributed, in particular Giovanni Michelotti who was ultimately responsible for over 1500 designs.

During that early period Carrozzeria Balbo built the 'ballon' for the Lancia Lambda. The 'ballon' was similar to what today are called hard-tops. With these removable tops it was possible to transform series torpedo bodywork into a closed car in a short time and with very little work. For Lancia, Balbo also made some Coupe de Villes on Theta, Lambda and Trikappa chassis.

Carrozzeria Balbo also worked on behalf of Fiat,

ABOVE: Franco Scaglione's striking Lancia Aurelia design did not translate successfully into metal



ABOVE: Balbo's 'siluro corsa' was based on a Fiat 509 SC truck chassis. Note the location of the driving mechanic and the vestigial mudguards

mainly building bodies for commercial vehicles (vans and pick-up trucks), but they also built 'tipo corsa' bodywork in the style of the more expensive torpedo-bodied cars but based on the standard 509 SC of 1927. In the meantime, Carlo Follis, the main contributor to Alfonso Balbo, took over the company in 1926 following the untimely death of its founder.

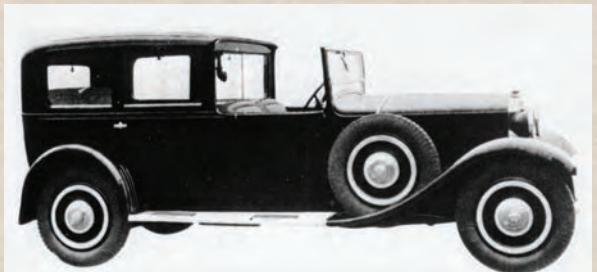
During the 1930s the orders for bodies from major clients diminished because Fiat and other domestic manufacturers began to create bodywork in their own workshops, the majority based on their own chassis. At this point Follis devoted more attention to the custom-built requirements of individual motorists.

The bodies for fuoriseries (outside series production) cars built by Balbo in the 1930s were not renowned for their beauty because the styling was dictated by the current, conservative fashions, even so the high level of execution satisfied customers, which allowed the company to grow and prosper. The main mechanical basis preferred by Carrozzeria Balbo during this period was the Fiat 6c 1500 chassis, which was not expensive and much appreciated by customers.

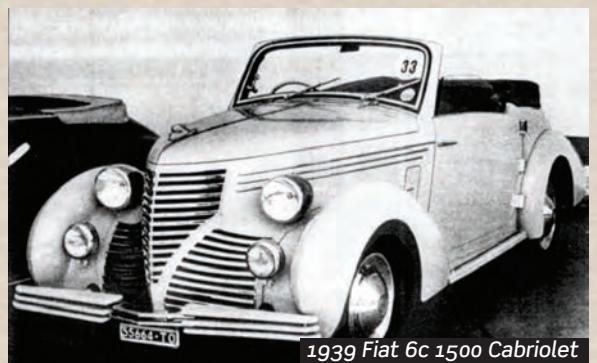
During the good times Balbo completed bodywork for a Fiat 6c 1500 at the rate of one each day. Unfortunately the outbreak of war in 1940 drastically reduced Balbo's activities, who then stopped altogether when bombing destroyed the factory buildings in Turin. When the war ended, the company moved to Via Gorizia at the junction with Corso Sebastopoli in Turin and began a fruitful collaboration with Giovanni Michelotti, who had just left Stabilimenti Farina to become a freelance designer. Between 1947 and 1949 Michelotti designed



1924 Lancia Trikappa Coupe de Ville



1930 Alfa Romeo 1750 Coupe de Ville



1939 Fiat 6c 1500 Cabriolet



1947 Fiat 1100 L Cabriolet

1948 Alfa Romeo 6c 2500 Coupe



1948 Fiat 6c 1500 Cabriolet



1949 Fiat 6c 1500 Coupe



bodywork mainly on Fiat 6c 1500 chassis, but also based on the Alfa Romeo 6c 2500, Lancia Aprilia and, curiously, Fiat 1100 Taxi chassis.

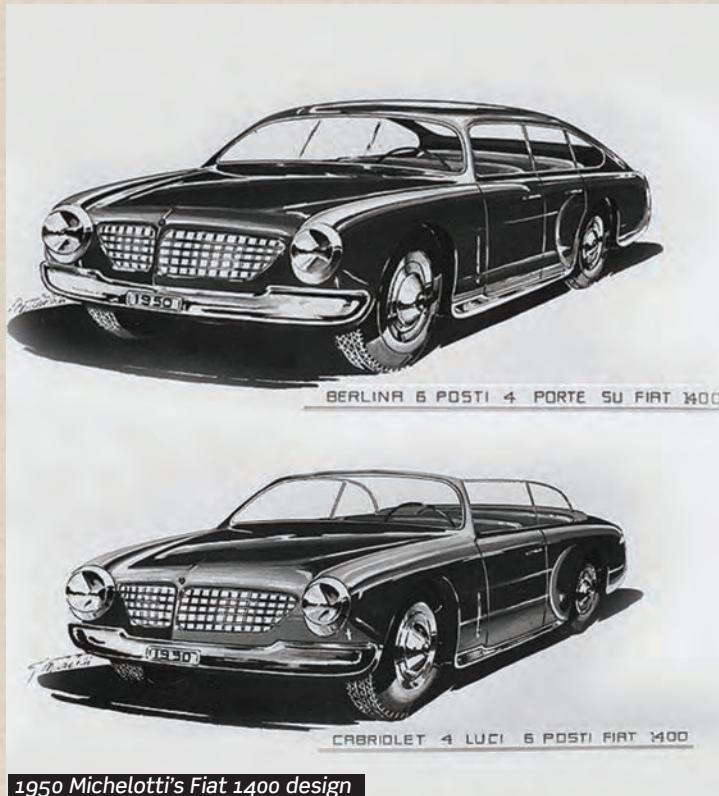
With the long chassis of the Fiat 1100 Taxi Balbo was able to build a series of coupes and convertibles with ample dimensions. They were certainly heavier and slower than the series saloon, but they were able to satisfy, at least in appearance, the desire for luxury by Italian drivers in those times of austerity.

The prolific creativity of Michelotti and the fast changing times, help explain why it is difficult to find stylistic continuity with the fuoriseries bodywork produced by Balbo in those post-war years. For example, a case in point is the 1948 Fiat 6c 1500 cabriolet, which incorporates pre-war design themes in the flow of the sides and the grille, but the vertical portion of the grille has a reduced impact. Turning to the 6c 1500 coupe of 1949, which illustrates that in less than a year the bodybuilder has retained the idea of a horizontal grille, but it is more accentuated and has an American influence. At the same time the flow line on the side has become more tense, and previewed the next step that the bodybuilder would take. This was demonstrated in a convertible version

TOP LEFT: 1948 Lancia Aprilia Cabriolet
ABOVE & LEFT: Examples of Balbo's transition from upright to 'USA' type grilles

BELLOW: Post-war long bonnets were replaced by a more modern design as seen on this 1952 Fiat 1400





1950 Michelotti's Fiat 1400 design

of the Fiat 6c 1500 that was presented a few months later. In this new model the side treatment is completely straight in ponton style up to the rear wing, which nevertheless retains a small hint of a proper volume. Some changes also occurred to the grille, which is considerably squarer and has more authority created by the wider chrome surface.

Now we come to the last phase of the design research conducted by the carrozzeria with the Fiat 6c 1500, the Vittoria Belvedere, which was a 4-seater coupe. The coachbuilder unveiled the model at the beginning of 1950, just before the Fiat 1400 replaced the 6-cylinder 1500 in the Fiat range. The most interesting elements of the Vittoria Belvedere's style are the absence of B-pillars and the panoramic rear window. Perhaps to make up for breaking the rules by producing a modern well lit interior, the coachbuilder took a step backward with the outdated grille, which reverted to being upright in the centre.

After closing its association with the Fiat 6c 1500, Carrozzeria Balbo's stylistic research was concentrated on its own interpretation of the custom-built Fiat 1400 and Lancia Aurelia, the new large Italian saloons of the early 1950s.



1950 Michelotti's Fiat 1400 in the metal



1949 Fiat 6c 1500 Cabriolet



1951 Lancia Aurelia Cabriolet



1952 Fiat 1400



1951 Michelotti Lancia Aurelia berlina



1953 Balbo B400 microcar

A one-off special was created for Carlo Follis, the Director of Carrozzeria Balbo, by a young Franco Scaglione who was on an engineering student's course in the early fifties. He contacted all the prominent Turin coachbuilders with his ideas on body design, complete with some sketches he carried under his arm. None of the carrozzerie visited by Franco Scaglione wanted to give him credit, but Carlo Follis agreed for Scaglione to turn one of his sketches into sheet metal for a four-seater Lancia Aurelia coupe with a pitched nose. Franco Scaglione's theory was that radiator grille design should be as thin and as low as possible. Comparing Franco Scaglione's design sketch with the actual Lancia Aurelia that was built, the idea of a 'pitching nose' (*muso picchiante*) lost



ABOVE: Balbo's most glamorous car was the 8V-engined 1953 Siata 208 CS

validity in the transition from paper to metal. However, Balbo's generosity in building the one-off for Scaglione led to the designer becoming an accredited designer at Bertone, where he remained until 1959.

In 1952 Balbo built its own version of the Fiat 1400 and Fiat 1100/103 but achieved limited success. They also took over the production of the fascinating Siata 208 CS from Stabilimenti Farina in 1953. After investing heavily in its B400 microcar project, the company fell into decline, mainly due to the overwhelming power of Fiat in the field of small cars. Carrozzeria Balbo closed its doors in 1954. 





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Rally Royalty

An important Group B car returns to the track after its sojourn for 29 years under a tarpaulin in Las Vegas

Story by Sean Carson
Photography by Michael Ward





Group B was a short-lived phase. Like rallying's rebellious teenage years it was fast paced, experimental, dangerous and incredible fun. And just like your adolescence, it was gone all too quickly.

For good reason though. It wasn't just driver safety that came under the spotlight, but the welfare of spectators, too. Power levels went crazy and people got killed. In fact, the death knell sounded for Group B on 4 May 1986 when Henri Toivonen and co-driver Sergio Cresto tragically lost their lives on the Tour de Corse. The next season it was terminated, lasting just five years. But as the Lancia 037 proved, it was great while it lasted.

VITAL STATISTICS

The 037 came at the start of the Group B era, when only really Audi was experimenting with all-wheel drive. Very loosely based on the Lancia Montecarlo with bespoke subframes for the front and rear suspension and a longitudinal mid-mounted engine (it was turned through 90 degrees compared to the Montecarlo to help weight distribution), this was a supercar for the loose.

At just 890kg, the 037 is featherweight. As you climb aboard and almost rip the flimsy carbon-Kevlar door off its hinges closing it, it shuts with a light, fragile slam. That's because

it is light and fragile; it's an unusually bright day in a wintery Lincolnshire, and the sun's rays are visible through the single skin panel.

Currently in Evo 2 spec, 325bhp is possible. Top speed is around 150mph showing 8000rpm on the clock. I can vouch for that. But more on that later, as to understand the performance – and more importantly, the significance – of this car, you need to understand its history.

A CHEQUERED PAST

Chassis number 318 was one of the earliest 037s constructed by Abarth. Registered in Turin, February 1983, which, yes, means it wasn't originally built to Evo 2 specification. It was initially pressed into service as a 'Muleto' – or mule – for testing. As the works T car for the whole of '82, it was used by Markku Alen as a test car for the 1982 1000 Lakes Rally, running in Evo 1 spec. Alen also used the car for the same purposes for the San Remo stages later that year in November, but it wasn't until '83 that 318 turned a wheel in anger.

Campaigned by Team Grifone, the factory-sprayed Würth liveried car was crewed by Fabrizio Tabaton and Luciano Tedeschini in the Italian Rally Championship – and how good does it look in the white, black and red colour scheme? Martini colours are iconic, and synonymous with Lancia rally cars, but it's nice to see an 037 wearing a different, period suit.

In the '83/84 off season the car was converted to full Evo 2 spec, meaning a re-bored engine to 2.1 litres, a water injection system to cool the intake charge – owing to the fact the 037 never used a charge cooler and ran increased boost in its final





iteration – and an increase in compression ratio. This took power from 265 to a quoted 325bhp.

The car started the '83 Targa Florio in the hands of Tabaton and Tedeschini until they crashed, damaging the front end heavily.

In current owner John Saunders' history file he remarks that, "Our chassis 318 was certainly the car crashed by Tabaton on the '83 Targa as it still has the very agriculturally mended damage on the floor pan behind the front corner. Only in a historic race or rally car would you actually be glad to find evidence of badly mended previous damage!" Quite.

From then on its fortunes looked up, taking second place at the Costa Smerelda and Rally Val d'Aosta events, before Würth pulled the plug on its backing and Team Grifone handed custody to Team Gaiss.

The Portuguese outfit only had custody of the car for the '84 season as, by this point converted to Evo 2 specification, it rented the car from the factory. Gaiss entered four rounds of the Portuguese national championship, one round of the Spanish rally cup and its home WRC event.

Things went well for the team at Rally Portugal '84, with the talented and fast local driver Antonio Rodriguez and his navigator Jose Cotter completing 15 stages in competitive order, splitting the works run 037s at the end of the Tarmac leg signified by the Povoa service park.

It's at this point things get very Italian. With the rally being run on mixed surfaces, the works team 'ran out' of gravel spec suspension. The lack of spares brought about team orders and a mandate from the factory Lancia squad for Team Gaiss to 'donate' its dampers to the works team so it could continue. Rodriguez was forced to retire as a result.

That was 318's big chance for a solid finish on the world stage, but it never materialised. From there Gaiss returned to the Portuguese national rally championship. However, in its next event, Rodriguez had to retire the car once more, due to injuries sustained from crashing a Toyota Starlet the night before the start of the rally.

A few more organic fragilities in its history saw it fail to finish, but driver error was matched by

ABOVE: Sponsors Würth are suppliers of power tools, fixings and fasteners

RIGHT: Minimal bodywork affords superb accessibility

LANCIA 037 RALLY



mechanical issues. Namely the gearbox.

By 1984 the 037 was nearing the end of its life at the bleeding edge of rallying as the twin charged Delta S4 was to be introduced for 1985. There was life in the old Muletto yet, however, as Gaiss chose to enrol 318 in the National Speed Championship, in which it won every event it entered bar one, picking up seven firsts and a second.

It's seen the chequered flag plenty, but it's also had a chequered history since then. From here the story gets a touch sketchy. Tam Auto ran the car in '85 at Rally Costa Smerelda, but beyond that not too much is known. Which is where Saunders comes in.

His current co-driver, Tony Hart, found the car in Las Vegas lying dilapidated underneath a tarpaulin, itself only covered by a carport. It was in a sorry state, but everything checked out so Saunders bought it and commissioned a full restoration.

KICKS LIKE A MULE

Which brings us to date. Today, in fact, where we're at Blyton Park to shakedown the 037 after a few changes. Saunders has driven it before on the Eifel Rallye, but was still getting used to it. Today, it's wearing a fresh set of Pirelli P7 Corsas on narrower, correct 7.5-inch front wheels, not the larger 8-inch items it previously ran.

New tyres means release agent and a lack of grip, and although a problem with the supercharger is restricting the 037 to 'only' 290hp, the ambient temperature is still hovering around three degrees and this is a Group B rally car.

That also means everything is cold, including the gearbox oil. The stick is reluctant to engage the dogleg first gear, the non-synchromesh 'box grunting. A few tries and it slots home unwillingly before we trundle out of the paddock and onto the track.

FULLBOOST. HOLY . . .

It's fast. Really fast. As in, an Aventador wouldn't see which way it went. It's so violent, too. The engine note inside the cabin is granular and hostile, overlaid by the

bandsaw-like supercharger whine that just gets louder and louder as the revs rise, rattling around inside your skull like a wasp on acid. The cabin fizzes from the vibration as the bodywork flaps in the breeze.

Temperatures are coming up, but the transmission still isn't making it easy for Saunders to pedal the 037 quickly. The brakes are solid and have enough bite from cold that my flailing head nearly introduces itself to the dash, but it's still grinding its dogs on downshifts and doesn't want to swallow new ratios going up the gears.

"You do have to finesse it," Saunders manages in a muffled shout, drowned out by helmets and that supercharger's crazed wail, "but the harder you drive it, the smoother it is."

The gearbox starts to open up and allows Saunders to massage the five-speeder's lever around the gate as he readjusts his style from the Metro 6R4 he was driving but 30 minutes ago.

Then, I see the boost needle spike in second as he gives it full hoof exiting the tight left at the end of the back straight. Before I know it I'm looking out of the side window at where our momentum is carrying us – and it's great fun.

"It's cold today, but it's so nicely set up you really do have to get angry with it to get it out," he says.

DEBRIEF

Having scrubbed the new front tyres in and done a run of quick laps, we head back to the pits.

"The turn-in is much better on narrower rubber, there's less push. The steering weights up less in corners and there's less self-centring effect wanting to tug the wheel from your hands. You could feel it wanting to unwind the lock before, but now it's just lovely."

The car is not totally devoid of understeer though – even from the passenger seat you can feel the forces load up the front tyres through the quick direction changes as the bond between rubber and road eventually begins to deteriorate. It's a progressive, soft feeling.

BELOW: Highly appropriate UK registration number
RIGHT: 2.1-litre engine will produce around 325bhp when fully sorted







In fact, the whole car is wonderfully compliant. There's no anti-roll bar at the back and you can feel the 037 compress the outside rear as it loads up. But that force doesn't unload with a sudden, stinging jolt. There's fluidity to the chassis and the huge, twin Bilstein period dampers soak up thumping kerbs with Rolls-Royce nonchalance – well, not quite, but not what you'd expect from a Group B rally car.

To me, from the wrong side of the car, the engine feels rampant, with a hunger for revs, spitting out that angry whine and almost painful snort from the exhaust. But to John Saunders it doesn't feel as fit as it should.

"There's a gaping flat spot between four and a half and six, and it's missing some revs." It should be running a 9:1 compression ratio, but the supercharger problem (it was the only component of the motor that wasn't fully overhauled, just serviced) means it's not quite punching the customary 037 haymaker.

"It's corked at 7200rpm at the minute, just where

the engine really starts to rip," says Hart. "It'll rev out to 8250, but we're cutting it just as it's starting to get going."

HISTORY REPEATING

That rev ceiling is the aim for the future, but the supercharger problem is first on the agenda. Once that's sorted, it'll be time to bring the water injection online to keep that intake charge temperature cool and constant. With this sorted, and on its modern mapping for improved reliability, it should be ballistic.

Saunders wants to work on the setup further – the team has messed around with the front roll centre, but more testing and development is needed to make the car that bit more manageable.

After that, all that'll be left to do is drive it in anger once again. Some Slowly Sideways rallies are on the schedule – however, in 037 number 318 I can only see 50% of that being true. 



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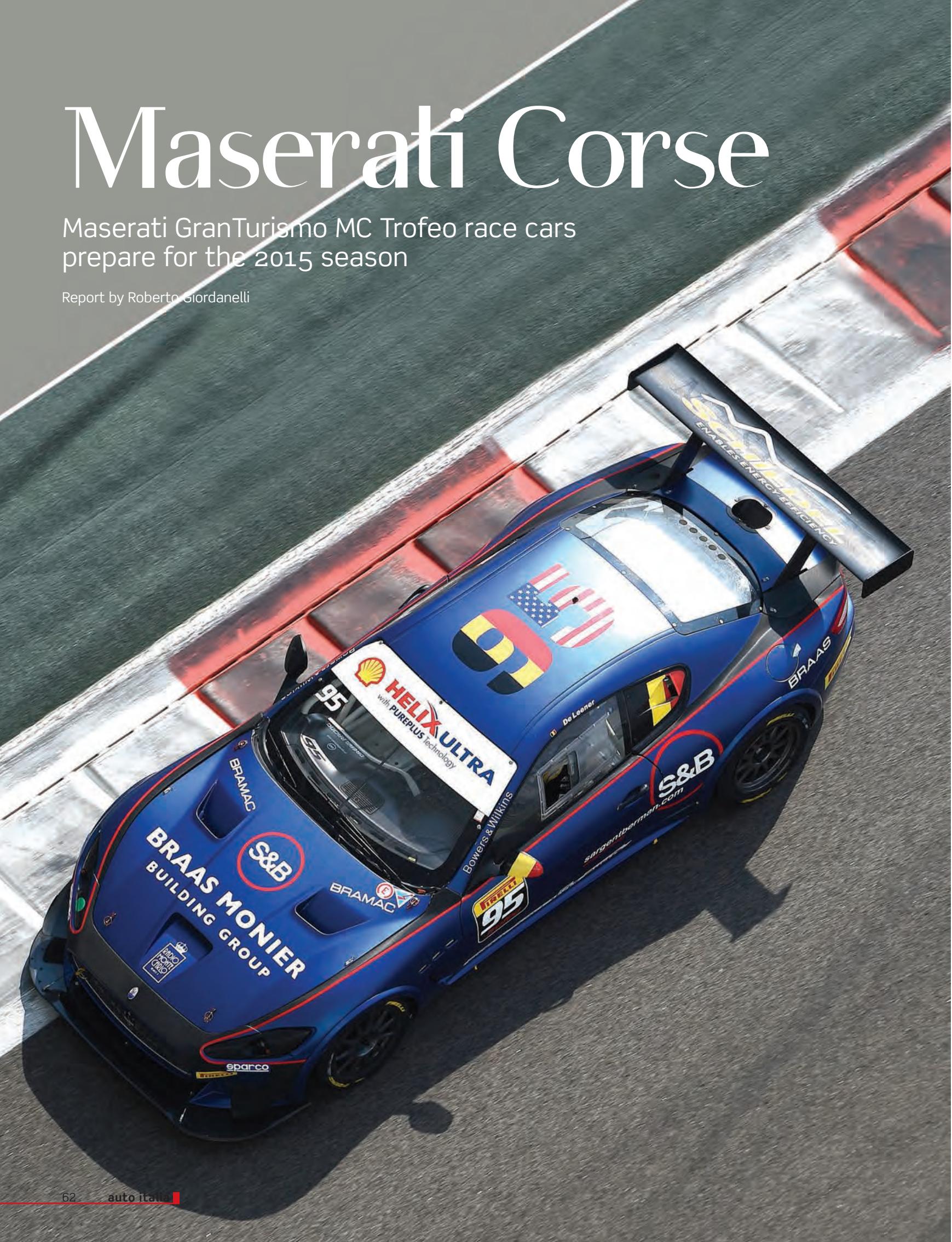
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Maserati Corse

Maserati GranTurismo MC Trofeo race cars
prepare for the 2015 season

Report by Roberto Giordanelli





Competing in world class motor racing may seem an impossible dream but there are ways to achieve such a prestigious objective. You could spend a few million driving in a GT Championship or £94,000 (€120,000 plus any local tax) and race in the Maserati Trofeo World Series. You can also share a car thereby splitting the cost; and you can carry sponsorship graphics to reduce the outlay further. And if you have your own business, it would not take an Einstein to come up with a tax formula for cost-free international motorsport.

The 2014 Trofeo season came to a close at the Abu Dhabi round on December 12th. As you can see from the race calendar, the championship venues are global. Once you have entered the championship, all you do is arrive and drive. There are six rounds, and if you add up the practice, qualifying and racing times, it means for 2014 you had 240 minutes of track time per round. For 2015 the format will change giving plenty of practice and qualifying time plus 2 x 40 minute races per round instead of the old 2 x 30 minute and 1 x 60 minute race. The new format will also see a starting grid inversion for race-2 with the first 10 cars from race-1 starting in reverse order.

The Maserati Trofeo is a serious racing series and the level of competition is very high. Racing in a one-make series ensures exciting racing. The new grid inversion is guaranteed to see fireworks. It will also mean the winner deserves huge respect. High quality footage of the close racing is easily found on TV and on the web, so sit back and enjoy. The cars are very fast and they also make a huge amount of noise. You have to be there to appreciate this. Nothing: absolutely nothing sounds like a ground-shaking Trofeo MC race car.

The Trofeo MC's have downforce, a rock-solid chassis, race suspension, monster brakes and sticky

slick tyres, so they are able to attack corners at an eye-opening rate. Acceleration figures are comparable to supercars but lap times are not. Hypercars can be excused the following onslaught. On a race circuit, a Maserati Trofeo race car would eat most supercars for breakfast as circuit racing is all about going round corners. Supercar number-crunchers may find this hard to swallow as the power-to-weight ratio of a Trofeo race car is a modest 354bhp-per-tonne. For example a Lamborghini Aventador LP700-4 boasts 444bhp-per-tonne. If you were to race a Trofeo against a conventional supercar on a race circuit, the supercar would be lapped after about nine laps. This calculation is based on a difference of 10 seconds per lap on a lap time of 1 minute 30 seconds. Don't get carried away here. Maserati's road-going version (the MC Stradale) is quick but no match for the race car. No one in their right mind could ever endure a proper racing car for road use.

I have raced in four of the Trofeo series since 2005 plus some private testing with the Maserati works race team. It was during a test session at the Misano Circuit in Italy that I came to terms with the Trofeo's downforce. Google a map of the Misano circuit and you can see that there is one fast right turn. Initially I downshifted from 6th to 5th, and dabbed the brake pedal. Too easy. Next lap, the same downshift but no dab. Still too easy. Finally, and with a deep breath, I took the turn flat-out in 6th. Welcome to the world of downforce. Misano also had six fast sections leading into brake-killing tight turns; a recipe for frying brakes on anything but a pukka race car. The Trofeo's brakes are bomb-proof. The car has a near 50-50 weight distribution as well as on-board read-out for adjusting the front-rear brake balance.

Maserati uses data-logging, and during de-briefs,



drivers are able to compare their traces with any quicker cars to identify their strengths and weaknesses. This is a massively useful tool. They also have simulators for the drivers to play with, although I question their usefulness. Simulator research that I have carried out suggests some help with familiarisation of a new circuit, but no use for car control.

If we go back to the previously mentioned 240-minutes of track time per round (that is practice, qualifying and three races) driver training experience tells me that an unfit driver starts making mistakes after 10 minutes, so Trofeo drivers need to be fit and experienced racers. That said, there have been some Trofeo drivers who have fast-tracked through the race licence process to reach the required standard, and then raced in the Trofeo series. Maserati also has pre-season testing to acclimatise drivers to the race cars. This means that the inexperienced are not excluded provided they can meet the standard and take the pace.

Maserati has built 40 Maserati GranTurismo MC Trofeo race cars during 2009 and 2010. 26 race in Maserati Trofeo championship and 14 have been sold to privateers. Of these 14, some have been bought by Teams that race in the championship (such as Konvex Motorsport, Swiss Team, Pierre Marie De Leener) and the rest to other privateers and collectors. Currently there are no cars on sale but they occasionally come onto the market. Most of the cars in the championship are run by the factory team, who look after the drivers and their guests in a 5-star way. The 2014 Championship was won by the Swiss driver Mauro Calamia claiming the honours.

The Maserati Corse website has comprehensive information and abundant video footage. What are you waiting for? Buy some good ear-plugs and live the dream.

www.maseraticorse.com

*LEFT: Roberto Giordanelli talks to the Maserati engineers after qualifying
FACING PAGE: Roberto's 'Auto Italia' entry at Silverstone in 2013*





CLASS STRUCTURE

You don't have to be an outright winner to receive an award as the Trofeo Series has the following classes:

- Trofeo Assoluto World Series – open to all drivers
- Trofeo Europa – open to all drivers
- Single Driver Cup – open to single drivers racing with cars owned and managed by Maserati
- Twin Driver Cup – open to twin drivers racing with cars owned and managed by Maserati
- Over-50 Trophy – open to all drivers over 50 years of age
- Under-30 Trophy – open to all drivers under 30 years of age
- Pole Position Trophy

CALENDAR 2015

Date and Circuit

- 23 April Paul Ricard (Testing)
- 26 April Paul Ricard
- 24 May Red Bull Ring
- 28 June Road America
- 23 August Virginia Raceway
- 25 October Suzuka
- 11 December Abu Dhabi



TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

GRAN TURISMO MC TROFEO RACE CAR

ENGINE:	V8 4691cc
BORE X STROKE:	94mm x 84.5mm
POWER:	488bhp @ 7200rpm
TORQUE:	402 lb ft (545Nm) @ 4850rpm
TRANSMISSION:	Rear-mounted 6-speed robotised manual paddle-shift
BRAKES:	Brembo vented discs 380x32mm (F) 326x28mm (R). 6&4-pot calipers. No ABS. No Servo, Twin master cylinders Warning lights for lock-up
SUSPENSION:	Double wishbones, anti-roll bars
WHEELS:	Speedline 11-spoke alloys 11x18/10 (F), 13x18 (R)
TYRES:	Pirelli Slicks 305/660/18 (F). 325/705/18 (R) 1380kg 188mph (301km/h) est 3.5sec est
DRY WEIGHT:	Trofeo World Series race hire all inclusive £94,000 (€120,000) plus any local tax. Two-driver teams split the cost
TOP SPEED:	
0-62MPH:	
PRICE:	



CLUB ITALIA

PREVIEWS AND REPORTS ON INTERNATIONAL
EVENTS AND ITALIAN CAR CLUBS

Ferrari F60 America

Ferrari's birthday party in Beverly Hills

Report and pictures by Keith Bluemel



Beverly Hills was chosen for the celebration, not only for its chic location amidst all the boutiques of the world's major fashion names, but because California is the largest Ferrari market in the USA. The factory was represented by the Vice-President, Piero Ferrari, incoming Chairman Sergio Marchionne and CEO Amadeo Felisa.

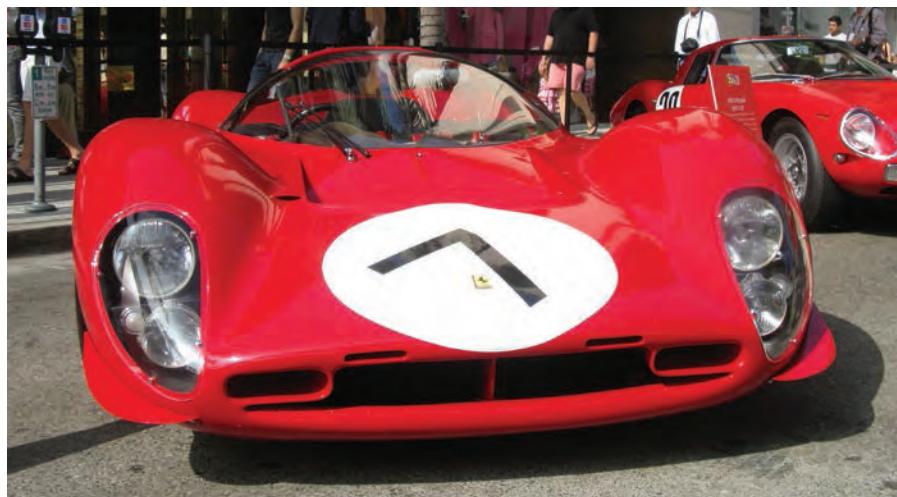
For participants, the event started with a gala dinner on the Saturday evening in the grounds of the municipal buildings hosted by the Mayoress of Beverly Hills, with live music spanning orchestral works to the singing of R&B songstress Mary J Blige, culminating with a spectacular firework display. While they were carousing the night away, the erection teams were busy transforming Rodeo Drive into a vast Ferrari theatre, with an impressive stage at the Wilshire Boulevard end, which would be the scene for the unveiling of the limited edition of 10 cars, Ferrari F60 America, at lunchtime on Sunday.

The F60 America is a barchetta built specifically for the US market, and is based on the F12 berlinetta, which boasts similar performance to the model upon which it is based. The suggested colour was the presentation colour, Blu NART, although clients have free choice. The car sat under a red shroud during the Sunday morning, although those who arrived early could catch glimpses of the form, while sections of the shroud were lifted to carry out last minute cleaning and detailing.

The car was unveiled after a speech by Sergio Marchionne, in the presence of Piero Ferrari and Amadeo Felisa, and once the stage was opened to the VIP pass holders, it was mobbed by those wishing to get a closer look at the latest jewel from Maranello. Once the hullabaloo had died down and the dignitaries had left the stage, there followed a question and answer session with four drivers who had driven Ferraris during their racing career. They were American drivers Bob Bondurant and Dan Gurney, together with Didier Theys, who was heavily involved in the 333 SP programme during the nineties, and ex-Ferrari F1 driver Stefan Johansson.

The 60 Ferraris representing 60 years were lined along the kerbs and either side of the central divide of Rodeo Drive. They made a great spectacle, both in the quality and variety of offerings, spanning the whole of the Ferrari production period. Their locations were determined by classes, i.e. cars from films and film stars, racing tribute, Le Mans tribute and Supercars. Even for hardened enthusiasts who attend events worldwide, this was a spectacular assembly of models, while to the general public who had free access it must have been a mind blowing experience. It would be easier to list what significant competition Ferraris and classic road cars weren't there than to list what were there. On that note, there were no four or six cylinder models in the feature displays, although there was an example of the 250 Monza, which is better known with a 3-litre four cylinder engine, like the 750 Monza and similarly a 625 TRC, another four cylinder model, but the example on show was fitted with a V12 engine in period.

Being so close to Hollywood, naturally there were cars from films, and these included a 308 GTSi used in the Magnum P.I. TV series, a Mondial t Cabriolet used in





Al Pacino's film The Scent of a Woman, and the white Testarossa used in the Miami Vice TV series. There were also other cars with film connections, notably a 275 GTB4 once owned by Steve McQueen and the 2014 Pebble Beach Concours winning 375 MM Scaglietti Coupe, once owned by film director Robert Rossellini.

The competition cars were truly spectacular, with the only remaining original 330 P4, a pair of 250 GTOs in 1962 and 1964 body configurations, a 250 LM, 250 Testa Rossas, including the 1960 Le Mans winning car, together with the 1957 315 S which won the final edition of the Mille Miglia in 1957, and the 166 MM Barchetta that took Ferrari's first Le Mans win in 1949. Add in more modern examples, like the 333 SP from the 'gos and the modern GT racing variants of 360 GT, 430 GT and 458 GT, and it can be seen that there was a rich vein of Ferrari racing heritage. Congratulations to Ferrari SpA and Ferrari North America for putting on a tremendous event and to all the owners who brought a wonderful selection of Ferrari's finest for everybody to enjoy and appreciate.



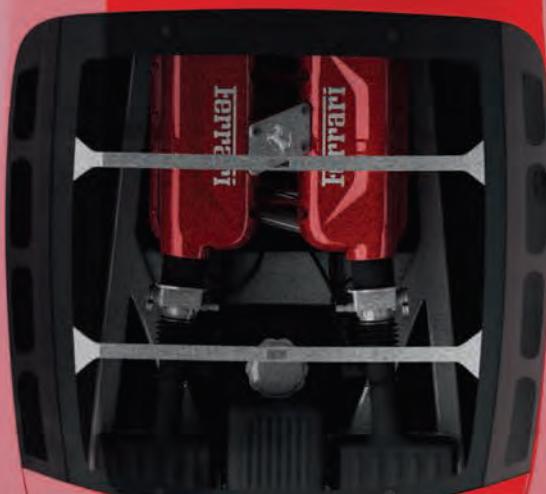
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Bologna - San Luca Hillclimb

Report on the unique historic car hillclimb
held within Bologna's city limits

Story by Peter Collins





Bologna is the largest city in Emilia Romagna with a population of around 385,000 people. It is renowned as one of Italy's gastronomic centres and is the home of the famous Fountain of Neptune from which Maserati derived its badge.

So, what better idea could someone have than run a hillclimb within the city limits. Despite rumours spreading of an easing in the laws in the UK regarding the use of public roads for motorsport, you would still be locked up these days for even thinking of such a radical idea, let alone the abuse from the British public. But in Bologna, on a beautifully warm and sunny autumn day, there were upwards of 60 historic competition cars unloaded in a car park opposite the football stadium in the south-west corner of the city, which brought the world one of its favourite and certainly the most well-known of pasta sauces. Incidentally, the recipe in its eponymous hometown is somewhat different to that propagated by most supermarkets in the UK but equally, if not more, delicious.

The start line of the climb is under an 18th century arch which spans the Via Saragozza, a busy residential and commercial street in the bottom left of the city as you look at a map. Although the arch spans the main road, it was originally built as the start of the climb up to the Sanctuary of the Madonna San Luca, a monastery on the top of a hill, visible from most areas around.

The road is well-surfaced and averages six metres in width and is 2.2km long. It starts with a steep exit from the main road and as fast a section as a car will go up a virtually 1 in 5 gradient, through the Meloncello right-hander where the only limit seems to be the courage of the driver, to a first summit almost halfway up. Hard braking is then required for a go left through an arch in the portico, followed by a right and left twist at Orfanello before more flat-out acceleration to the Passo Carraio, a go right back through the same arcade and a burst of power then takes cars over the finish.

There is a deliciously Italian moment at the beginning and end of each day, as the paddock is not far short of a kilometre from the start, so the competing cars are driven on

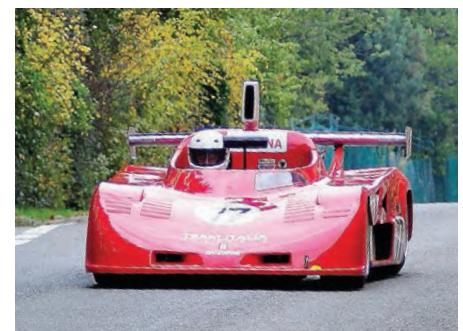
the road, through everyday traffic, turning right at a major set of traffic lights and then parked up in a further holding area with another right turn before the start line.

As each car is called up, it appears from under another 18th century arch and turns right onto Via Saragozza. The atmosphere is superb, with spectators both at street level and in the arcade above the arch and lining the hill. Once started, there is no margin for error for competitors. The nearside of the track is simply unyielding stone arcade to help concentrate the mind.

The entry consisted almost entirely of saloon and GT cars except for Fassler Urban, who had brought his immaculate 1965 Cooper T77 Climax 1.5-litre V8 Grand Prix car. While it seemed fairly clear that Giuliano Peroni, in his blindingly quick 1973 Osella PA3, would top the times list, his fastest ascent took a pip over one minute for the 2km. Giuliano Palmieri, in his thundering De Tomaso Pantera, which shook the ground as it passed much to the bemusement of the older spectators, certainly seemed as quick, but watches don't lie and it lagged by about 3-4 seconds per climb after the three timed runs on the Sunday. Third overall was the very clean-sounding and fleet little Dallara X1/9 of Remo De Carli which was a similar distance behind the Pantera.

Of note, the slowest man, but certainly the most determined, was Andrea Lieto in his 1300 Alfa Giulietta Ti. Francesco Amante looked good in his Alfa 1900 Touring, as did Edilberto Mandelli in his Lancia B20. Giuseppe Covotta's Fiat 128 sang its way to the top, while the phalanx of Alfa GTams were good value. It wasn't all Italian cars by any means. A group of beautifully prepared and very fast BMW 2002s were impressive, all lifting wheels under power through the fast right-hander. But it was the sight and sound of Giuliano Peroni, hard on it and never flinching, in the Osella that reminded me of why I love motorsport so much. It was a great weekend, made all the better by fine weather and a view of the city behind the cars, from high up the hill, which must be unique in hillclimbing, if not in motorsport.

The event organisers are Scuderia Bologna Squadra Corse and I would like to take the opportunity to thank Matteo Amante for his help. ■



Ginger Beer Promotions Events

Auto Italia at Brooklands Museum Saturday May 2nd

Developed over the last 29 years in association with Auto Italia, this event has become established as the UK's premier event for owners and admirers of Italian cars. The historic Brooklands Museum venue provides visitors with the opportunity to see and hear Italian cars being demonstrated on the demanding hillclimb and the circuit at the adjacent Mercedes-Benz World.

Visitors arriving in any Italian car, be it a Fiat or a Ferrari, will have the opportunity to park in the areas set aside for the appropriate marques, car clubs and register displays. Club organisers should contact Phil Ward so space can be allocated.

Among the anniversaries this year are 20 years of the Fiat Coupe and g16 Alfa Romeo GTV, and displaying cars will be an event feature.

This is a capacity event so pre-booking for fast track entry is advised. For information on how to obtain pre-booked discounted tickets visit:
www.brooklandsmuseum.com





SUMMERTIME CLASSICS STANFORD HALL

Sunday June 28th

Launched in 2013 this exciting event will be held again in the manicured parkland of Stanford Hall. Centrally located with access from the M1 and A1M motorways, this superb stately home will be host to extensive displays of classic cars and bikes of all marques and nationalities.

The event incorporates an Italian 'Club Italia' concours and general classic car concours competition which forms the centrepiece of the event. A special feature will be an Alfa Romeo Master Class. Owners of concours Italian cars are invited to submit their entries.



SUPERCAR SUNDAY BROOKLANDS MUSEUM

Sunday July 19th

Developed over the last three years, this exciting event will be repeated at Brooklands for 2015. This is a rare opportunity for the public to get close to exclusive motor cars and also see them in action. At most venues, exotic cars are fenced off in secure enclosures but at Brooklands, with its friendly atmosphere, the visitor can inspect the cars at close quarters.

Historic Brooklands has easy access via London's arterial motorways and is conveniently located just within the orbital M25. It has excellent aviation and motoring exhibitions including the Concorde Experience, London Bus Museum and 4D cinema.

The event has proved to be popular with car clubs that put on complementary displays for members and also take part in the Test Hill runs. Owners of supercars are invited to contact the organisers for information on free entry.



AUTUMN MOTORSPORT FESTIVAL BROOKLANDS MUSEUM

Sunday October 11th

Competition cars from all ages will again be put through their paces on the Mercedes-Benz World test track. Selected cars will also run up the demanding Brooklands Test Hill. Visitors can expect to see – and hear – a wide variety of competition cars including Formula 1, F5000, CanAm, GTs, Touring cars, Group B rally cars and historic cars like the record breaking 1933 Napier Railton – holder of the outright lap record at Brooklands. This is the only venue in the UK where visitors can get really close to competition cars in action.



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Fiat Club of Victoria

www.fiatclub.org.au

Fiat 500 Club

www.fiat50oclub.org.uk

Fiat 500 Enthusiasts Club GB

www.fiat500enthusiasts.co.uk

Sporting Fiats Club

www.sportingfiatsclub.com

Fiat Barchetta UK Owners' Club

www.fiatbarchetta.com

Fiat Forum

www.fiatforum.com

Fiat Bravo and Brava Owners' Association

www.fiatboo.co.uk

Fiat Multipla Owners' Club

www.multiplaoowners.co.uk

Fiat Cinquecento & Seicento

www.clubcento.co.uk

Fiat X1/9 Owners' Club

www.x1-9ownersclub.org.uk

Fiat 127 Forum

www.fiat127.com

Fiat 131 Mirafiori Forum

www.131mirafiori.com



The Fiat Coupe Club UK

www.fccuk.org

Fiat Punto Forum

www.puntosports.co.uk

The Other Dino (Fiat)

Brian.Boxall@maxxiun.com

Fiat Scotland

Scotland's dedicated Fiat community

www.fiat-scotland.com

Fiat & Lancia Club of Western Australia

www.fiatlancia.org.au

Lamborghini Club UK

Contact: Lynne Bull, Membership Secretary, Barnside, Wrotham Road, Meopham, Kent, DA13 0AU Lynne@Lamborghiniclub.co.uk
www.lamborghiniclub.co.uk

Lancia Motor Club

Contact: Sarah Heath-Brook
 31 Creffield Road, Colchester, CO3 3HY
membership@lanciamc.co.uk

Lancia Montecarlo Consortium

www.montecarlo.org.uk

International Association of Lancia Clubs

www.viva-lancia.com

Club LanciaSport

www.lanciasport.com

Stratos Enthusiasts Club

www.stratosec.com

Maserati Club

Contact: Dave Smith, 2 Sunny Bank, Widmer End, Bucks HP15 6PA Tel/Fax: 01494 717701
admin@maseraticlub.co.uk
www.maseraticlub.co.uk

Northern Ireland Italian Motor Club

www.niimc.net

Italian AutoMoto Club

www.italianAutоМоЖClub.co.uk

Yorkshire Italia

www.facebook.com/YorkshireItalia

Scuderia Italian Car Club

South Australia

www.scuderiaitaliancarclub.asn.au

DIARY DATES

March 20-22

Milano Autoclassica

Fiera Milano Rho

www.milanautoclassica.com

April 16-19

Terra di Canossa

International Classic

Car Challenge

Emilia, Liguria, Tuscany

www.gpcanossa.it

April 18

Goodwood Track Day

Lancia Motor Club

www.lanciamotorclub.co.uk

April 26

Spring Alfa Day

IWM Duxford

www.aroc-uk.com



May 29 to June 1

Sliding Pillar Rally

Molsheim, France

www.lanciamotorclub.co.uk

May 22-24

Villa d'Este Concours

Lake Como

concorsodeleganzavilla

deste.com

May 2

29th Italian Car Day

Brooklands Museum

www.auto-italia.net

May 31

Bergamo Historic GP

Bergamo

www.bergamohistoric

granprix.com

June 2-7

15th Modena Cento Ore

Rome to Modena rally

francesca.azzali@canossa.it

June 11-14

Parco Valentino

Salone & Gran Premio

City of Turin

www.parcovalentino.com

June 12-14

Cholmondeley Pageant of Power

www.cpop.co.uk

June 14

Italian Masters Car Fayre (Alfa Book)

Seighford Driving Centre
 Stafford
italianmasters.events

page.org

June 21

National Alfa Day (AROC)

Gawsworth Park

Cheshire

www.aroc-uk.com

June 21

Classics at Sharnbrook

Sharnbrook Hotel
 Bedfordshire

June 25-28

Goodwood Festival of Speed

Goodwood House

www.goodwood.com

June 28

Summertime Classics

Stanford Hall

www.auto-italia.net

July 5

British Grand Prix

Silverstone

www.silverstone.co.uk

July 19

Supercar Sunday

Brooklands Museum

www.auto-italia.net

September 26-27

Spa Italia

www.spaitalia.be

October 11

Motorsport Day

Brooklands Museum

www.auto-italia.net

October 16-18

Isola d'Elba Revival

Classic enduro race

www.itde2015.com



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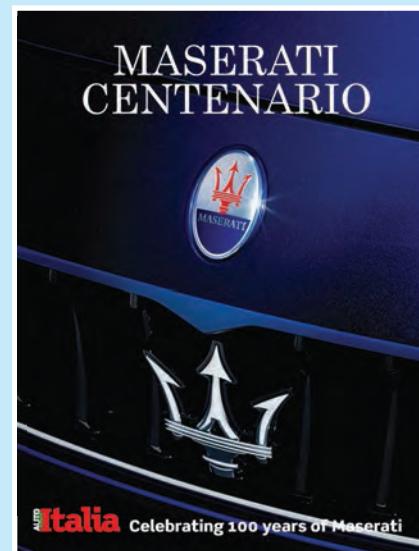


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YOUR CARS

AUTO ITALIA READERS REPORT ON THEIR WHEELS

Alfa Romeo 4C - an owner's view

Jamie Porter is an Alfista and is a successful Alfa Romeo specialist. He also owns a 4C

Until now, no one has said what the Alfa Romeo 4C is like to own and the press, including journalists in these hallowed pages, have been allowed room to present their own conclusions, right or wrong.

So what in my opinion as a 4C owner is the 4C all about? To find this out it may be best to do a bit of reverse engineering.

Firstly could you get a set of golf clubs in it? No. So it's not all about posing at the golf club then. Secondly, could a young lady get in or out with some decorum? No. So it isn't about going down to the pub pulling girls then. The passenger seat does not adjust on early left-hand drive cars so it is definitely not all about your passenger. That leaves one thing, you, the driver, it's all about you!

Now we know who the

4C is aimed at, so what is it for? A little look down the options list gives you a bit of an idea; race suspension (note, not sports suspension) and a race exhaust are obvious clues; more subtly on the options list there is a car cover and a battery charger. So we have a car that is not designed to be used every day but goes really fast, so shall we call it a track day car then or just an extreme road car? However, in the owner's

manual it states: "Using the car on the track should be regarded as an exception", so the Le-Mans 24 Hour race is out!

I was lucky enough to get my hands on a Launch Edition 4C and it came with lots of 'freebies', one of the most interesting was a track day (that word again) at Varano in Italy with an instructor thrown in. The first

piece of tuition I was given by the instructor was never let go of the steering wheel; this does not feel natural but it automatically makes the layout of the controls seem more logical. If you keep your hands in one position the paddles on the steering wheel



are exactly in the right position. Varano is a very tight circuit and to get round some of the corners, while keeping your hands in the same position on the steering wheel, means that your hands go over centre which pulls your shoulder forward so the back of the seat has to be a lot more upright than you would expect. I found myself winding the back of the seat forward, considerably away from its stop. A lot of the press say that the seat does not go far enough back, however if you follow the race instructor's advice there is more

than enough adjustment for anyone.

The steering wheel itself has come in for some criticism both for its shape and texture, again there is a lot of logic to it once you have driven the car for a while. The flat bottom gives you a reference as to where the up and down paddles are and the Alcantara is perfect for drying off those sweaty palms when you are on a hot lap. This car was definitely developed and tested on a circuit, it is not as extreme as some UK track day specials but it is pretty quick round a circuit. To give you some

idea its time round the Nürburgring Nordschleife puts the 4C just behind the Audi R8 (420bhp) and just in front of the BMW E92 M3 (414bhp), that's pretty quick.

I have now done around 3500 miles in my 4C as I have used it as my day to day car throughout the summer/autumn. As yet nothing rattles and while it is practically useless as any form of a family car, as just purely personal transport it is pretty amazing. Speed becomes a concept that doesn't have to be worked at. Thought translates almost instantly into

speed and that speed can also be scrubbed off almost instantly. The digital dash can't keep up with the acceleration, it will often miss all the increments between zero and 10mph, after that it might randomly decide that it is good to use the 7 X table so you get 14, 21 and 28mph as the next increments on the dash. As the speed builds the dash eventually decides it can keep up and starts counting in single digits – somewhere around 100mph!

The brakes are amazing, again

to have some idea of what the Alfa Romeo engineers were trying to achieve, you really need to do the driving course at Varano. A lot of the press claim the brakes are grabby and lack feel unless you really stand on them, that is exactly right. The instructors at Varano get you to hit the brakes as hard as possible as late as





possible, do not feed the brakes in gently. If you think about it the best place to scrub the speed off is in a straight line, it does not unsettle the car so the more speed you can scrub off in this phase of the corner the faster you will go. The instructors then get you to back off the brake gently to lift the front of the car off the floor to transition into the cornering state smoothly so the car is in balance, applying a small amount of power just before you turn in to settle the car, it works. It works on the road as well if you are on the power the car is a lot more stable, on a trailing throttle the car has a tendency to wander, sniff out lorry ruts etc, exactly as the press states.

Drive the 4C as it was

designed to be driven and the only issue you will have is one with Her Majesty's constabulary. In day to day terms the car is roughly as quick as a 600cc motorbike and you find yourself overtaking like you would on a bike. At A road speeds you look for a gap in the traffic coming the other way, pull out then hit the accelerator and pull back in.

The handling is above all safe, that is quite a compliment. Twenty years ago a car with this sort of performance would have been for racing drivers only. Now it is safe, push on too fast into a corner and all you will get is mild understeer and a good telling off from the car. You can tell the slip angle of the front tyres to within a fraction

of a degree, such is the communication from the steering wheel. Get this right and the car will tell you that too, push it too far and you might get slight oversteer through very slow speed corners if you really try but generally the car has no tendency to bite you. In the wet it will happily wag its tail but as long as you are not in race mode the electronics will sort it all out before it becomes too out of shape. In normal mode the computer backs the throttle off very early and keeps it off for what seems like an age which is slightly disconcerting but in dynamic mode the car feels very natural recovering from a tail slide. Day to day I will tend to leave the car in dynamic mode, however if

you fancy a bit of a laugh through town it is quite amusing to use the normal mode. This slows down the speed of the gear change, then when you pull off the traffic lights with about $\frac{1}{4}$ throttle you get the most amazing cacophony of noise that you can possibly imagine as the car changes up the gearbox, it is pure theatre, no one with a soul will be looking anywhere else. Even without the added noise the 4C is quite a statement when driving through town, small boys' heads rotate like they were on stalks, teenagers give you the double thumbs up and lads with their girlfriends are distracted.

My conclusion after six months of 4C ownership

is not at all difficult to summarise; it is an amazing bit of kit, no it doesn't go off road, you can't take the kids to school in it, it isn't practical, the cup holder is a joke and the Porsche Cayman S is a better car day to day. But on that one day – and it won't be every time you go out, it may even be just that one corner – there are few cars that will reward you as much as the 4C. Think of it this way, do you remember what you were doing two years ago today? You might have had a nice day, the sun may have been out, you might have had a nice meal at the pub, that's a Porsche sort of a day, nice but day to day. Next think of the day you graduated or got married, that's a 4C sort of a day!



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BUYERS GUIDE

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT OWNING A TOP END CLASSIC

Ferrari 456 GT



Report by Chris Rees
Photography Michael Ward
Feature sponsored by Superformance

Four-seater Ferraris are among the last to be caught in the general up-draught of values for Maranello classics. So now is exactly the right time to invest in one of the great remaining Ferrari bargains – the mighty V12-powered 456 GT.

Svelte, potent, luxurious, elegant – Ferrari's 456 GT seems like the perfect all-rounder from Maranello. So why is it such a fantastic bargain at the moment, with prices still starting below £30,000?

Well, four-seater Ferraris have not yet found favour in the 'investment market' – which has kept prices low for enthusiasts. There are signs that things could be changing though: with the proliferation of events such as Goodwood, the demand for cars in which you can take a family out has increased. And the 456 GT really fits the bill: a four-seater of the highest calibre, which cost £180k new by the end of its run, with a thoroughbred V12 engine and near-190mph performance – what could be more tempting?

The 456 GT was the belated replacement for the 412, which died three years before Ferrari announced its 456 GT in 1992, while it took another year for it to arrive in the UK (October 1993). The last Ferrari to follow Maranello's traditional naming system, it was badged 456 because each cylinder measured 456cc. With its all-new V12 engine, this

was the second-most powerful Ferrari road car ever at the time (after the F40), and also the world's fastest production four-seater.

Initially the 456 GT was offered only with a six-speed manual but in 1996 came the 456 GTA (Automatic) with an FF Developments four-speed auto. And with a top speed of 185mph, it was the world's fastest car with an automatic transmission. Then in 1998 came the 456M (Modificata), with changes to the aerodynamics, cooling and the interior (new seats, fewer gauges and a new audio system), although mechanically it was unchanged save for a revised cylinder firing order.

Some 3289 examples of the 456 were made, of which fewer than 400 came to the UK: 141 GT manuals, 68 GTAs, 33 456Ms and 139 'M' autos. There's still a wide choice of used examples out there – so what are they like to own, and what should you look for when buying?

ON THE ROAD

The 456's fabulous 5.5-litre V12 engine is utterly smooth, surprisingly refined and remarkably flexible – the ideal engine for touring. But as the revs build above 4000rpm, the sound changes to a guttural growl and it will gleefully hurl itself towards a

7250rpm rev limit. Despite a hefty 1690kg kerb weight, this 442bhp beast is very fast, capable of 0-62mph in 5.4sec and 0-100mph in 11sec.

Around corners, this is a well-balanced, neutral machine, albeit one with the ability to bite. Switchable ASR traction control means you can induce power slides at will, while the three-setting electronic dampers (Sport, Touring and Intermediate) provide plenty of adjustability. In Touring mode, for example, the ride quality is way better than you'd expect of a Ferrari.

ENGINE & TRANSMISSION

The 456 engine was an all-new V12 with a 65° 'V' and a capacity of 5474cc. An all-alloy unit with Nicasil-treated cylinder liners, it boasted 48 valves, twin overhead camshafts on each bank and dry sump lubrication.

Opening the bonnet reveals a slightly scary profusion of parts, but the engine is one of the best things about the 456: being relatively unstressed it's durable – as long as it's been meticulously serviced. Check for oil leaks around the cam cover, while lambda sensors are also prone to failure. Engine warning lights coming on are common – this doesn't necessarily mean a big issue, though: it's more likely to be a fault in the ECU. The cost of replacing one of those, however, is £1200 – and there are two of 'em.

The six-speed manual gearbox, mounted in unit with the differential and final drive as a transaxle, is also robust, as is the auto 'box. Specialists recommend a change of gearbox oil every 12 months. Clutches can be changed without removing the engine, but it's a two-day job (expect to pay at least £1500 for this). The cost of a reconditioned gearbox is around £2500 for a manual and £7000 for an auto.

In terms of construction, the 456 has a tubular steel spaceframe chassis with aluminium body panels welded to it using a sandwich-type filler called Feran.

The independent wishbone suspension is damped by electrically adjustable Bilstein dampers; these are self-



levelling at the rear, and are notorious for leaking. The cost of replacement is £800, but they can be overhauled for much less. Vented disc brakes and ATE calipers work well but discs typically last only 10k miles, and pads merely half that.

CHASSIS & BODY

As for the bodywork, Pininfarina's Daytona-esque styling looks demure to some eyes, but beautifully well-proportioned to others. Slightly gimmicky was the spoiler in the rear valance, whose angle changed according to your speed; clearly Ferrari thought so too, as it changed it to a non-movable spoiler with the 456M.

Most of the body panels are aluminium, so rust isn't too much of an issue, although damaged panels are expensive to repair. Accident-damaged 456s are often not written off, so always do a history check. If there is a rust issue, it's on the nearside floor where the sill joins it.

A few panels are in composite material, like the front and rear bumpers, as well as the huge clamshell bonnet; check this is all straight, as the cost to replace one is a staggering £7000. The retractable headlight pods are electrically operated, so check they both work smoothly.

The paintwork should be in top order. The most popular colours are blue, silver, grey or green; red isn't a well-liked shade for the 456 but Mike Wheeler at Rardley Motors says he's sold on yellow examples very quickly.

INTERIOR

The cabin is a vision of 1990s sumptuousness: exquisite Connolly leather, electronically adjustable front seats, windows and mirrors, eight-speaker CD system and air-conditioning. The eagle-eyed may spot some Fiat parts bin switchgear, though. This is an





exceedingly comfortable place to be, at least up front; the rear seats are best viewed as 'occasional' – OK for children but not for taller adults over long distances.

There are a few issues to look out for. The fascia, particularly around the heater panel, suffers from bubbling, while the leather upholstery suffers the usual wear you'd expect of an ageing car. The other main problem is the frameless windows, which are designed to drop slightly as the doors open. This means they easily become misaligned, exacerbated by a tendency for the regulator mechanism to wear. There is no proper fix for this; the cost of a new regulator is £800 per side, but a specialist should be able to adjust and realign the windows to keep them operational. Owners regularly report electrical gremlins, too, with electric



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seat mechanisms especially prone to failure.

Ferrari's five-piece fitted leather luggage set is gorgeous, and if your 456 doesn't have it, it'd be a great shame – especially as you're looking at £2000 to buy a replacement set.

RUNNING COSTS

As long as you accept that the 456 GT is an expensive car to run, you'll be OK. It really needs proper servicing and maintenance by someone familiar with the model. This is without doubt a very labour-intensive car to service, and Mike Wheeler at Rardley Motors recommends setting aside £3000 per year for servicing (including consumables like tyres and exhausts).

Many parts are actually reasonably priced but there are some stinkers too, such as £1600 for a radiator and £5000 for a full factory exhaust system. Small wonder that many owners fit stainless steel aftermarket items. The 456 requires a minor service every 6000 miles or annually (typical price £600); major services are typically £1200, while the cost of a cambelt change (recommended every three years or 24,000 miles) is around £800. One other factor to consider is fuel bills: 12mpg is far from unusual.

Easily the two most important things when buying are to check the history carefully, and have the car looked at by a specialist.

PRICE GUIDE

The days of sub-£25k 456s are now over, and the very least you should consider spending is £30k, with £40k netting you a solid, looked-after car. The very best 456s can still fetch upwards of £80k. Manual transmission cars are more desirable, with values really showing signs of rising, especially with low mileage.

SAMPLE PRICES

456 GTA 1998, 28k miles, silver	£29,995
456 GT 1996, 47k miles, silver	£32,000
456M GTA 1998, 63k miles, blue	£34,995
456 GT manual, 1995, 54k miles, black	£39,950

Many thanks to Mike Wheeler at Ferrari specialists, Rardley Motors of Hindhead, for help with the compilation of this feature. Tel: 01428 606616.
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1991 Alfa Spider S4. Black, tan interior, LHD Californian car for restoration. Last used Feb 2013, been standing since MOT failure sills (£300 welding quoted), body and mechanics in good condition when taken off road. Could be a good project? Car in Brighton, £2000 ono. Tel: Nathan, 07974 017375 or Simon, 07973 868478. A230/009



1992 Alfa 75 Twin Spark LE. Red, no.1186, 2nd owner from 28.03.96, 61,000, FSH, MOT, receipts for everything, featured in Auto Italia Aug 2003, concours winner Stanford Hall 1999, fabulous condition, £2550. Tel: 07878 357043 (Kent). A230/030



1992 Alfa 75 LE Twin Spark. Red, no.2497/2500. In my ownership 7 yrs, 132K. Full Recaro interior. Looked after by Tony Favarin 'Road & Race Developments' Witney. Mechanically good with recent clutch, doughnuts, brakes and new quality battery. Daily driver and reliable, strong and smooth engine, faultless gearbox. Good history file. Like many of its colour and period, it has paintwork issues. New MoT and tax till May, £1950 ono. Tel: Tony, 07704 883367. A230/035



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Alfa Romeo GTV 6 2.5 G.R.A. One of ten built, chassis no. ZAR116C0000010195. Second car built by Autodelta and subsequently purchased by Mirabella Racing approx three years later. Original docs, original period 'technical passport', period documentation, 230 CV engine, open exhaust (plus silencer for road use), torsion bars 35mm, Speedline wheels (+ 8 spares), Lockheed brakes (4 front - 4 rear), Autodelta gearbox and differential. Special Koni shocks for this type of car, rose jointed suspension, hydraulic handbrake, original Bosch GR.A air flow meter, original Autodelta bumpers, period roll cage, original seats also available. Visit Berni Motori Race Shop at www.bernimotori.com. A230/032



Alfa Romeo 75 2.0 Twin Spark 1991. Rebuilt 2006, 68,000 miles. Engine rebuilt and modified by Bianco Auto Developments. New gearbox synchromesh, new clutch, balanced propshaft. CSC manifold and exhaust. Full RSR rose jointed adjustable suspension, fully polybushed. Spherical centre bearing in DeDion. 330mm front discs, 4 pot Brembos. Grooved rears, new calipers, Aeroquip hoses. Compromotives with custom offsets, Toyos. Excellent bodywork, Dinitrol treated. Full spec available, inspection ramp with prior arrangement, £4000 ono. Tel: Tony, 01342 717764 or 07952 525053, or Paul, 07739 988966 (Gatwick area). A230/023

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2005 Alfa Romeo 147 1.9 JTDM Lusso.
73,000 miles, Dijon Blue, 55-reg, with pale grey leather. I have owned this car virtually from new, it was an Alfa dealer's demo. It has a full service history, all MOTs and 2 new tyres. If you are looking for a diesel 147, look no further! £2250. Tel: Colin 07811 464780 (Rugby). A230/015



2006 Alfa Romeo 156 1.9 JTD MultiJet. 145,000 miles, red. 6-speed gearbox. Comprehensive history. Cambelt changed at 102K. Leather interior, radio/CD, air conditioning, alloy wheels. MOT Sept 2015. Straight car, good condition for year, £1395. View in SE Essex. Message or email me for owner's contact details. Email: stuart.alfa@virgin.net. A230/017

Alfa Romeo 156 GTA Sportwagon. A case of too many cars is forcing me to offer my blue 156 GTA Sportwagon on 53 plate for sale. I have owned it since August '07, during my time it has been looked after exclusively by Alfaaid in Maidenhead, currently 98,500 miles. Has had gearbox rebuild with new clutch and Q2 fitted, has Koni FSDs and Supersprint exhaust, usual stuff has been replaced: oil cooler, water pump, suspension bits. Last cambelt service two years ago, I have all receipts to show dates. Open to sensible offers. Email: Graham at g.couchman@steel-sci.com. A230/020



Alfa Romeo 147 1.6 Lusso 3 door.
2004, 52,300 miles, red. Low mileage, FSH (Alfanet), new cambelt, 2 new tyres, leather seats. MOT May 2015. Genuine reason for sale - purchase of newer Alfa GT. A very smart, tidy car with immaculate interior, a/c, cruise control, £1650 ono, further details from 07976 850618. A230/033

Alfa Romeo Alfetta GTV. 1985, 99K, for renovation, spares/repair, £795. Tel: Martin, 01737 769887. Email: airmart@hotmail.co.uk (Surrey). A230/036

Good home for old friend wanted.
Alfa Romeo 145 2 litre Cloverleaf, S-reg, metallic red, 135K, long MOT, new clutch, ideal investment, worth a look, £750. Tel: 01903 205139 (West Sussex). A230/037



1997 Alfa Romeo 916 GTV Coupe 2.0 TS. 86,000 miles, metallic grey, MOT to Nov '15. Well maintained including new belts/pulleys/waterpump/radiator/lower rear suspension arms + bushes all round/air con compressor. Winter tyres (good) on pepperpot alloys plus set summer tyres on 5-hole alloys. Excellent bodywork/paint, red leather interior, mechanically strong, overall vgc. Have bought a Brera so sadly must sell. AROC member, £2150 ono. Tel: John Griffith, 01745 550330 (North Wales). A230/014



Alfa Romeo 156 Selespeed 1970cc. 2000, 59,800 miles, silver, owned since new, FSH last 8 years by Gonnella Bros Catford, red leather seats, new battery, MOT Feb 2015, taxed Feb 2015, photos upon interest, £450. Tel: James 07901 528605 (Bromley, Kent). A230/021

2001 Alfa Romeo 156 Lusso 2.0 16V Twin Spark. 116,000 miles, silver, 5 speed manual, full black leather interior, electric windows front and back, a/c, 2 keys, remote central locking, alarm/immobiliser. Full service history with bills, new MOT Sep 2015, 4 previous owners, very good condition throughout! £1100 ovno. Tel: 07809 774098. Email: sargyrou72@gmail.com. A230/038



2004 Alfa Romeo 156 Sportwagon 2.0 JTS Veloce. 82,000 miles, red. 54 plate, black leather interior, CD auto-changer, telephone, boot liner and luggage nets. Sportpack, Mot Oct 2014, 6 mths RFL. 2 keys, 82K miles, belt and tensioners replaced at 65K. Service history by Alfa specialists, lovely example, £1495. For further information please telephone Phill: 07963 367950 (Gloucestershire). A230/034



2000 Alfa Romeo 156 2.0 Twin Spark Selespeed. Red 4 door saloon, 36,000 miles, one owner (myself), garaged all its life, electric windows front and rear, auto air conditioning, leather seats, alloy wheels, 6 CD interchanger, Selespeed, good boot space, power steering, stunning condition for age. Untouched original paintwork, £1250. Tel: 07762 210306. Email: p.baines2@btinternet.com (located in Leadenham, Lincolnshire). A230/016



Limited Edition. Carbonio Black, full black leather interior with dark alloy wheels. In excellent condition, FARSH plus interim oil and filter changes, only 37,000 miles, 2nd owner (1st owner Alfa Romeo) owned for last three years, AROC member. Cambelt and rollers and 84K service at 27,207 miles Feb 2013. Last serviced at 33,259 miles March 2014, MOT until end of March 2015, £9000 ono. Tel: John, 07885 239291 (Croydon). A230/018



2003 Alfa Romeo 916 Spider 2.0 JTS. 73,500 miles, black. MOT September 2015, full document service history incl two cambelt changes, new clutch with lots of receipts of work done. My ownership new rear arms with Powerflex bushes, new drop links, new front wishbones, new discs and pads all round, air con regassed, three sets of keys with two remotes. This Spider is in excellent condition with stunning terracotta leather interior, £3500. Please ring Dino for more details. Tel: 07791 509613 or 01554 755245. A230/012



Alfa Romeo GTV 3.0 V6. 2000, 84,000 miles. Rosso Red, W-reg. Documents, service history, complete with 3 keys. Previously owned and modified by Alfa workshop manager. I've owned for 3 years. V/fast, lovely sound, fab road holding, great fun to drive. 5 months' tax, 11 months' MOT. Excellent example of much sought after and getting rarer enthusiast's car. It will appreciate, hence £4500 ovno. Tel: 07515 396211 (Bucks). A230/031



2005 Alfa Romeo 916 Spider 3.2 V6. 49,500 miles, red. Excellent condition, always garaged and covered. New cambelt, water pump, idlers, radiator, battery, complete clutch, Q2 diff, rear bushes, etc. New ECU early this year. A properly maintained and looked after car, serviced by Peak Alfa. Speak to Roger there for more servicing and maintenance info, £8500. Want more info? Tel: Paul, 07970 903876. A230/013



Alfa Romeo Spider 2.2 JTS. First registered 29 Dec 2009, 40,000 miles, Rosso Red, recent service including brake pads and new cam belt. FSH, dealer maintained, 12 months' MOT, 2 years' mechanical parts and labour warranty. Black leather interior, professionally applied ceramic body work protection. Gun metal grey powder coated 5 hole alloy wheels. Beautiful example of this iconic car, £11,950. Tel: 07941 192818. A230/029



Alfa Romeo Giulietta Veloce 2.0 JTDM 170bhp. 2012, 31,750 miles, red, high specification model, panoramic/sliding sunroof, 18-inch teledials, full black leather interior, FMDSH and warranty until Sept 2015. New premium tyres, very nice condition, £11,750 ono. Tel: 07894 964478. Email: jonathanabarker@btinternet.com. A230/022

FERRARI

Ferrari 360 Spider. Manual, 2004, Rosso/Crema. Daytona seats. Red carpet, factory shields. Full and comprehensive service history. Only 11,580 dry miles. Absolutely immaculate, virtually as new condition, £59,500, this car will not disappoint! Tel: 01248 851032 or 07957 882121. Email: hip.kins360@gmail.com. A230/039

FIAT



Fiat Panda 100bhp. Fitted Turbo conversion 160hp, only one in UK! As featured in issue 184 of Auto Italia, 5 page spread, will email on request. Basically a 2008 Fiat Panda 100hp 1.4 16v 6 speed in black but with a Turbo conversion producing 160bhp and 0-60 in 7.5 sec. Huge list of performance conversion items fitted as part of totally unique conversion. Stunning performance with exhaust note to match. MOT to June 2015, no advisories on last MOT cert, 47,000 miles with FSH, meticulously maintained by its three previous enthusiast owners! Excellent condition, fabulous fun car for only £3750. Text: 07772 785927. Email: funkyphilip@gmail.com (Kent). A230/063



Fiat Coupe 20V Turbo. Dry stored for the last 6 years, the car is nearly 17 years old, it is in excellent condition. The car was never driven during the winter. MOT March 2015, 92,400 miles, cambelt change 70K, 3 keys, sunroof, £2800. Tel: 07935 830055. Email: arturobrogna@yahoo.co.uk (Carmarthenshire). A230/061



Garage sale!! Fiat, good 903cc engine conversion, MOT'd, offers. Fiat Panda 750L, MOT'd, vgc, offers. Tel: Nick, 07720 115557 (Bedford). A230/062



Fiat 500 F. LHD, Jan 1971, 82,238km (51,398 miles), red, petrol 500cc, 2 cylinders, 4 stroke, £10,500. Fully restored to its former immaculate bodywork and original parts in and out. Engine rebuilt, serviced, new clutch and tyres with spare and original tools. Full Italian log book plus history. Tel: Paul, 0039 3332 285136. Email: p.conti_1@hotmail.co.uk (Italy). A230/002

LANCIA



Lancia Fulvia Zagato. 1970, Series I, 1.3S. Superb condition in all respects, £24K, please call for full details. Tel: 01932 953435 or 07710 393864 (Surrey). A230/007

MASERATI



2004 Maserati 4200 Cambiocorsa. Immaculate, unmarked and maintained regardless of cost by fastidious owner. Metallic green with beige leather interior, 25,000 miles. First registered 28.09.04. Kept garaged. FSH, last serviced August 2014. New clutch at 18,000 miles. Leather interior completely re-Connolised 2013. Sports exhaust system, Tracker, alarm and immobiliser fitted. MOT until 20.08.15. New gel battery fitted summer 2013. Skyhook suspension, traction control, 6 CD multichanger, sat nav and integral car phone, electric windows, driver and passenger airbags, height adjustable driver and passenger seats, steering wheel height and rake adjustment, Alloygator wheel rim protectors fitted, 1 previous owner. Private plate not included, £17,495. Tel: 07810 883264. Email: howard.cornes@gmail.com. A230/060



1987 Maserati Biturbo Spyder 2.5. Manual. Red/beige leather, MOT to Dec '14, 2 owners, only 28,700 miles, service history, original handbook and invoice, workshop manual, £8950. Tel: Peter Plant, 01283 702245. A230/058



Maserati Biturbo 430. 1989. Black with light grey interior, 2.8 manual gearbox, bodywork restored last year. Regularly serviced at McGrath Maserati. A fast excellent car that needs no work, change in circumstances forces sale, £5000. Tel: Malcolm, 01462 769492. Email: malcbarton55@gmail.com. A230/059



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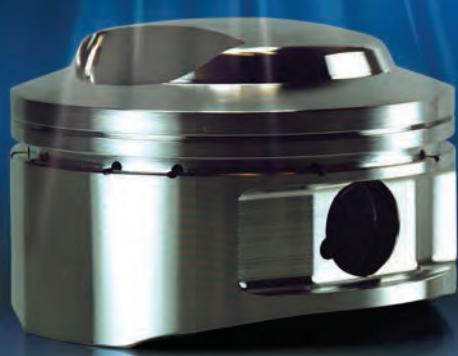
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A pair of rear window seals for a Punto 3dr with one small split, otherwise perfect condition, hardly used, £5. Tel: Daniel, 07528 594013. A230/069

156 Auto Maxi roof bars and Mont Blanc box. As new, only used twice. No reasonable offer refused as they are hanging up in garage and I keep banging my head on them. Tel: 020 8651 1753 (Surrey). A230/025

Alloy wheels 147/156. 4x16-inch Elegance alloys for 147/156, fair condition with part-worn tyres, £100 ono. Email: simon.johnson753@ntlworld.com. A230/026

4 Borani RW3344 Record 15x4.5K wire wheels. Fully refurbished with new spokes, polished centres and rims. Tel: 01531 650181. A230/042

Alfa wheels. 4 no 16" teledial graphite grey with tyres, suit 147, 156, 916 GTV etc, make me an offer. Tel: Roy, 07954 099482 (collect from Sawbridgeworth, Herts). A230/043

MOTORCYCLES



Garage sale! Vespa small frame, MOT'd, big bore kit, offers. 1960 125 Vespa VBB, blue, MOT'd. Tel: Nick, 07720 115557 (Bedford). A230/074



Marelli rear brake pad set. Fits Alfa 145, 146, 155. Also Fiat Bravo and Bravas, and Lancia Dedras. New and unused, £10 plus carriage. Tel: Richard 07818 715502. Email: ricloon@yahoo.co.uk (Bexhill, East Sussex). A230/073



Any ideas, Fiat 132? Window winder mechanism. If I am wrong please let me know. Brand new, £10. Email: dannyuno123@hotmail.com. A230/068

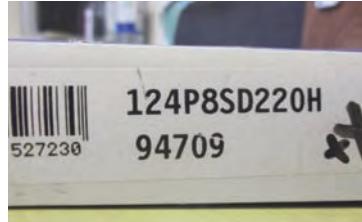


New and unopened Dayco cam belt 94713 to fit Alfa 1.9 or 2.4, Fiat Bravo/Brava, Punto 1.9JTD or 2.4JTD, £5. Tel: 01246 464926. A230/071

Brembo brake calipers. Refurbished Brembo 305mm brake calipers, seal dust caps and painted, £200. Email: richardmorrill@ymail.com. A230/044

Stainless steel exhaust GTV 916.

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Classic car part Fiat 124 Coupe or Spider reconditioned starter motor for sale, £80 + post. Tel: 07935 830055. Email: arturobrogna@yahoo.co.uk (Carmarthenshire). A230/005

Alfa 75 Saloon parts. Doors, bonnets, boot lids, bumpers, roof panel, rear NS quarter panel. Tel: 07802 934278. Email: dalley@dalleypeter1.orangehome.co.uk. A230/046

105 Series parts. Large quantity of 105 Series parts for sale, collected over 40 years. GT, Super, Berlinetta: engines, gearboxes, carbs, lights, plus many other rare bits and pieces. Prefer to sell as one lot. Tel: Ian, 07796 955148. Email: ducati.rider@hotmail.co.uk. A230/047

75 exhaust. Brand new offside front pipe for Alfa 75 3ltr, purchased in error from EB spares. Inclusive cost was £135, will accept £80. Tel: Steve, 07788 905152. A230/048

Alfa Romeo parts. Mainly Giulia 105 Series and Alfasud, for sale at www.autotreasures.co.uk. Also books, prints, posters and other memorabilia. A230/049

MISCELLANEOUS

Small collection of Italian 1/43 model cars for sale as a group of 20 or as individuals, Lancias, Alfas, Maseratis. Tel: 07702 564561. Email: greenmx5@btopenworld.com (Suffolk). A230/004

Lancia collection for sale. Owner's club magazines, motoring magazines, photos, brochures, books and more! Please contact me if you are looking for anything on Lancia cars. Tel: 01273 583057. Email: mrmarkyt@hotmail.co.uk (East Sussex). A230/050

Auto Italia magazines for sale. From issue 1 1995 till 2012. Full sets, £900 ono, good condition, some still in wrapper. Tel: 07917 607163 or 01492 546168. A230/051

Cherished registration number for sale 'S8 FRX'. On retention certificate, £135 including DVLA transfer fee. Tel/text: David, 07710 543576. A230/052

Auto Italia issues from 1995 to 2014, 168 issues, £60, vgc. Tel: Bill, 07958 636202 (Lancashire). A230/053

'M7 MAS' registration. MY MASerati registration (M7 MAS) for sale. If you would like to have the ultimate registration for your Maserati, please call 01525 221635 for further information. A230/054

Auto Italia issues 2, 3, 5, 20, 21 and 49, two hardback Abarth books and lots of Alfa sales brochures etc for sale. Please ring Alan: 01635 202521 for more details (Berks). A230/055



Early owner's manual(s) 1920s. 1928 Alfa Romeo 6 cyl 1500 maintenance manual. Alfa Romeo Turismo 17/75 6 cyl 1750 maintenance manual, offers. Email: rosking@freentname.co.uk. A230/067

PARTS



A pair of Weber IDF40 carburettors on their original (Fiat/Lancia twin cam) waffle manifold. Dry stored many years, polished ports. Change of plans. Now very rare, £500. Tel: 07779 390007. Email: ollyyellow@gmail.com (Hampshire). A230/019

Lancia Dedra 1990-94. New radiator, headlamp, badges, and literature. Used grilles. Any Dedra owners still out there please phone or email for more details. Tel: Bob, 01684 892906. Email: bobhirschhorn@gmail.com (Malvern, Worcs). A230/041

As new items for sale. I have a number of as new items for sale, open to offers, these were bought when I purchased my 2008 156. Seventeen spoke 17" alloy complete with Goodyear; Alfa seat genuine seat covers for 2010 GT; Alfa 156 genuine car mats, plus other 156 items. Email: jamesgoldup@aol.com. A230/024



Any ideas, Fiat 132? Window winder mechanism. If I am wrong please let me know. Brand new, £10. Email: dannyuno123@hotmail.com. A230/068

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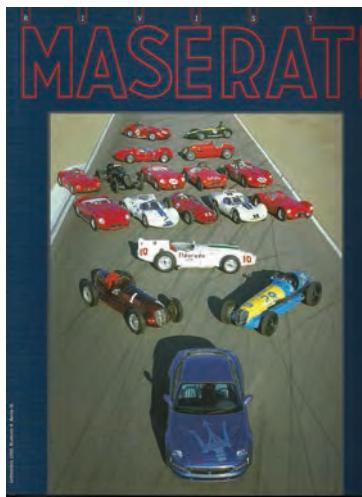
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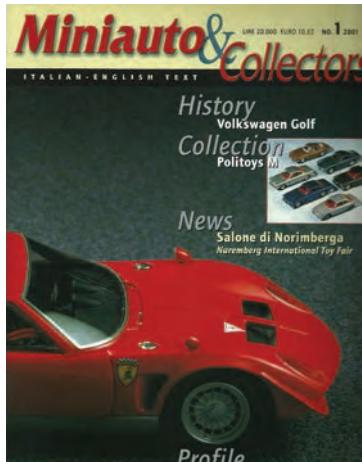
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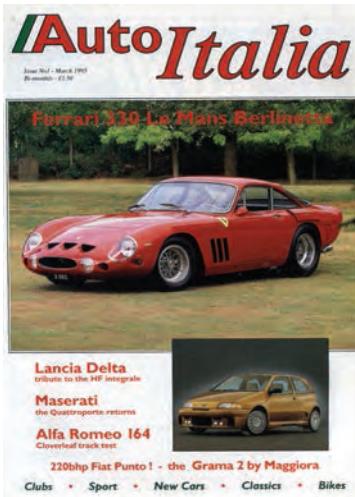
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Miniatures & Collectors

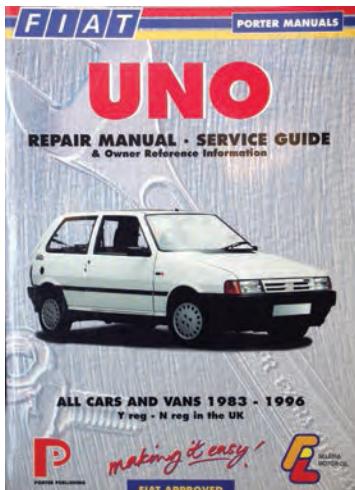
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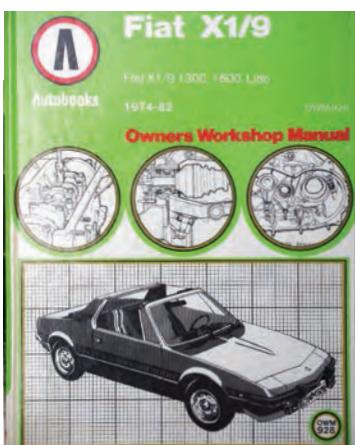
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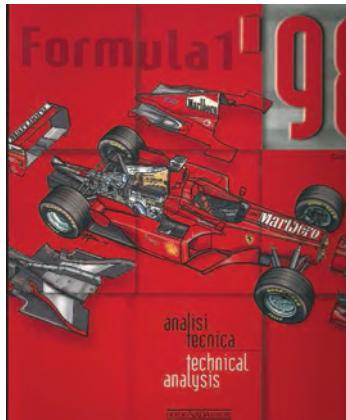
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Fiat Multipla - the appeal of reason

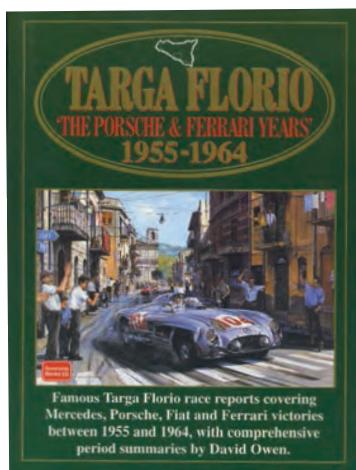
Arty, 80 page hardback 1998 press launch book. Not offered for public sale. Has excellent design sketches of prototypes. Trendy studio and outdoor photography A must have for Multipla enthusiasts. £25



Formula 1 Technical Analysis

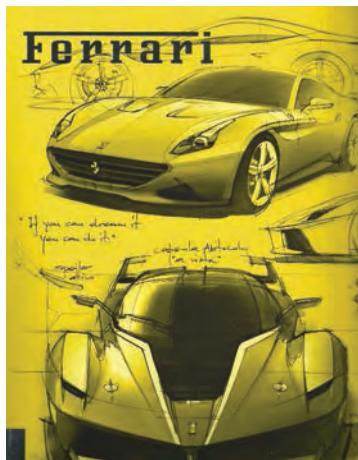
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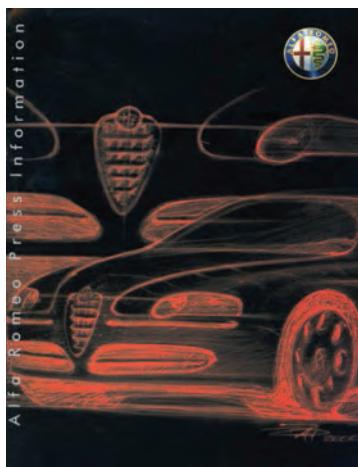
The Official Ferrari Magazine 27 December 2014

60 years in the USA. 458 Speciale A. F12. Le Mans winners. LaFerrari. AF Corse. FF. £45 (list €100)



Haynes Workshop Manuals

Used clean owners workshop manuals for various models including Fiat 131, 132, 850 (faded spine), 127 (faded spine), Lancia Beta and Lada 124. £8 each



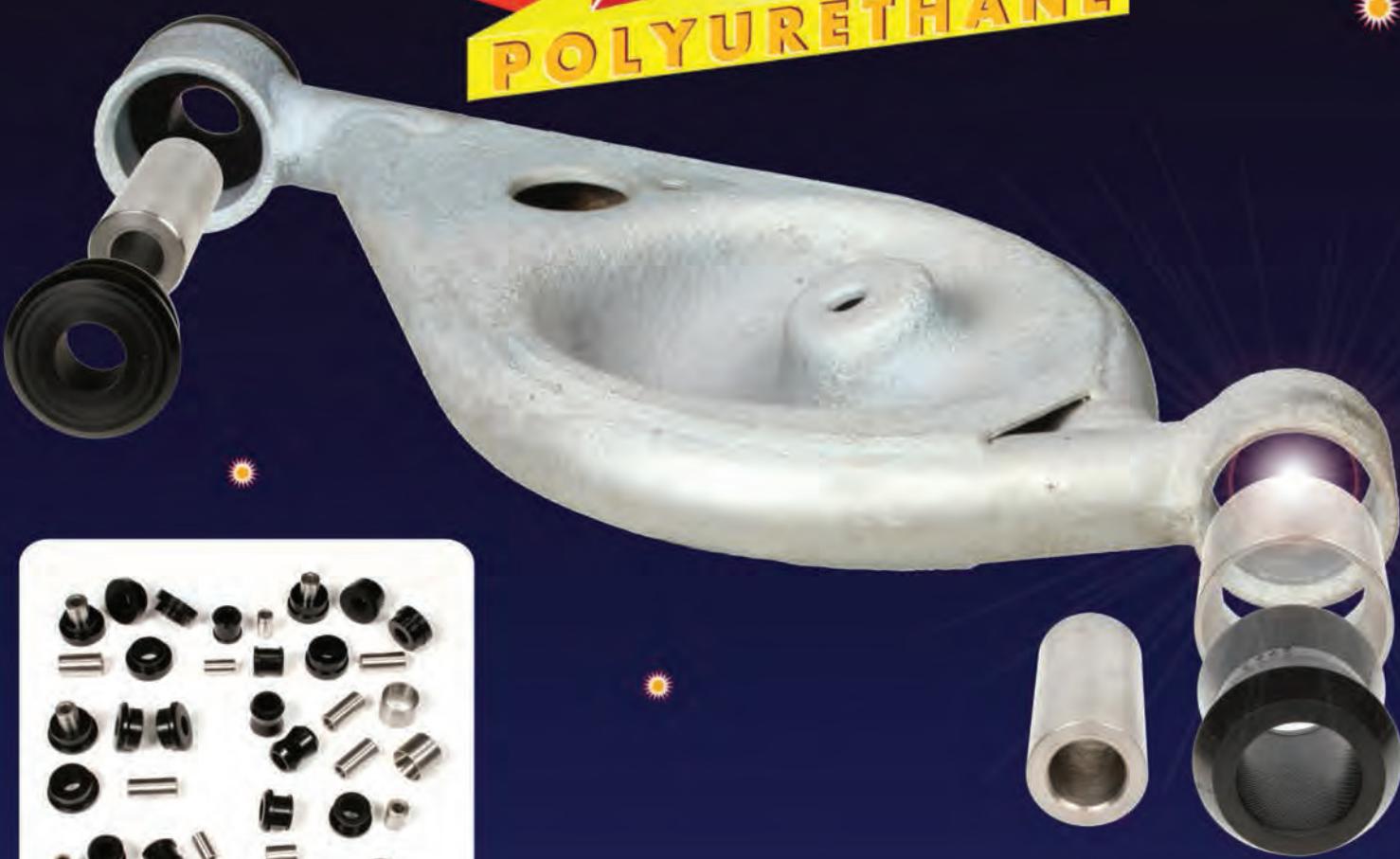
Alfa Romeo 156 Press Pack

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OBSCURATI

CURIOSITIES FROM THE AMAZING WORLD OF ITALIAN CARS

Studebaker Italia

Story by Chris Rees



The 1950s and early '60s witnessed American car design at its most excessive, but it's worth remembering the influence Italian coachbuilders had on The Big Three in period.

Chrysler, for example, effectively saved Ghia from extinction with commissions to build show cars for studio chief Virgil Exner. GM, meanwhile, tapped Pininfarina for its design expertise while smaller players such as Nash, Packard, Hudson – even Checker – weren't above recruiting Italian styling houses for their input. That said, their contributions weren't always well publicised at the time.

Studebaker, by contrast, did not look to Europe. However, Italian marque concessionaire Renato Bornigia wasn't above trying to improve on the regular Lark production model and went so far as to tap the multi-talented Pietro Frua to redesign the model in 1960. Bornigia was keen to produce something better suited to local tastes, with Frua taking a Lark VIII convertible as a basis for a two-

door coupe that was revealed at the November 1960 Turin Motor Show.

The Studebaker Italia was powered by a 259cu in, 4.2-litre V8 and remained mechanically stock, but the body was dramatically different from the regular Lark. If anything, it borrowed styling cues from a near concurrent project for Volkswagen's Swiss importer, not least the quad-headlight arrangement. Sharp creases ran

the length of the flanks aft of the front wheelarches, the lower portions of bodywork being concave.

Bornigia hedged his bets by also showing a four-door variation on the theme. This was similarly a Frua design, but was built by Carrozzeria Francis Lombardi of Vercelli. While sharing similar styling themes with its coupe sibling, it appeared more angular and upright. The saloon was subsequently shown at the March '61 Geneva Motor Show. Intriguingly, it was displayed on the Italsuisse stand, the Swiss coachbuilder – and long-time Frua collaborator – being tipped to produce both iterations of Italia in volume. Bornigia was clearly shopping around as Francis Lombardi was also approached as was Carrozzeria Viotti (plan drawings exist with Viotti's crest on them). The four-door Italia was still being shown in late '61 where it was joined at the Turin Motor Show by another

prototype, this time based on Studebaker Hawk running gear.

There were, however, one or two slight problem-ettes. Reports in the local media talked of a production run of 1000 cars per year for the Italian market although it remains unrecorded whether or not the Studebaker Corporation was willing to play ball. In addition, you have to wonder if there would have been sufficient demand given the crippling tax hikes for cars sold in Italy with a displacement over two-litres. Either way, Bornigia's scheme came to naught.

As to what happened to the prototypes subsequently, the coupe is believed to have been sold in 1961 and it has since disappeared into the ether. The four-door Lark, however, surfaced in Rome in the early '80s, a collector acquiring it minus engine and with front-end damage. He also managed to locate the Hawk-based car before offering both for sale in 2004 for the all-in price of €10,000.





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